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Volume CLXXI No. 2237 The SPHERE, London, December 5, 1942

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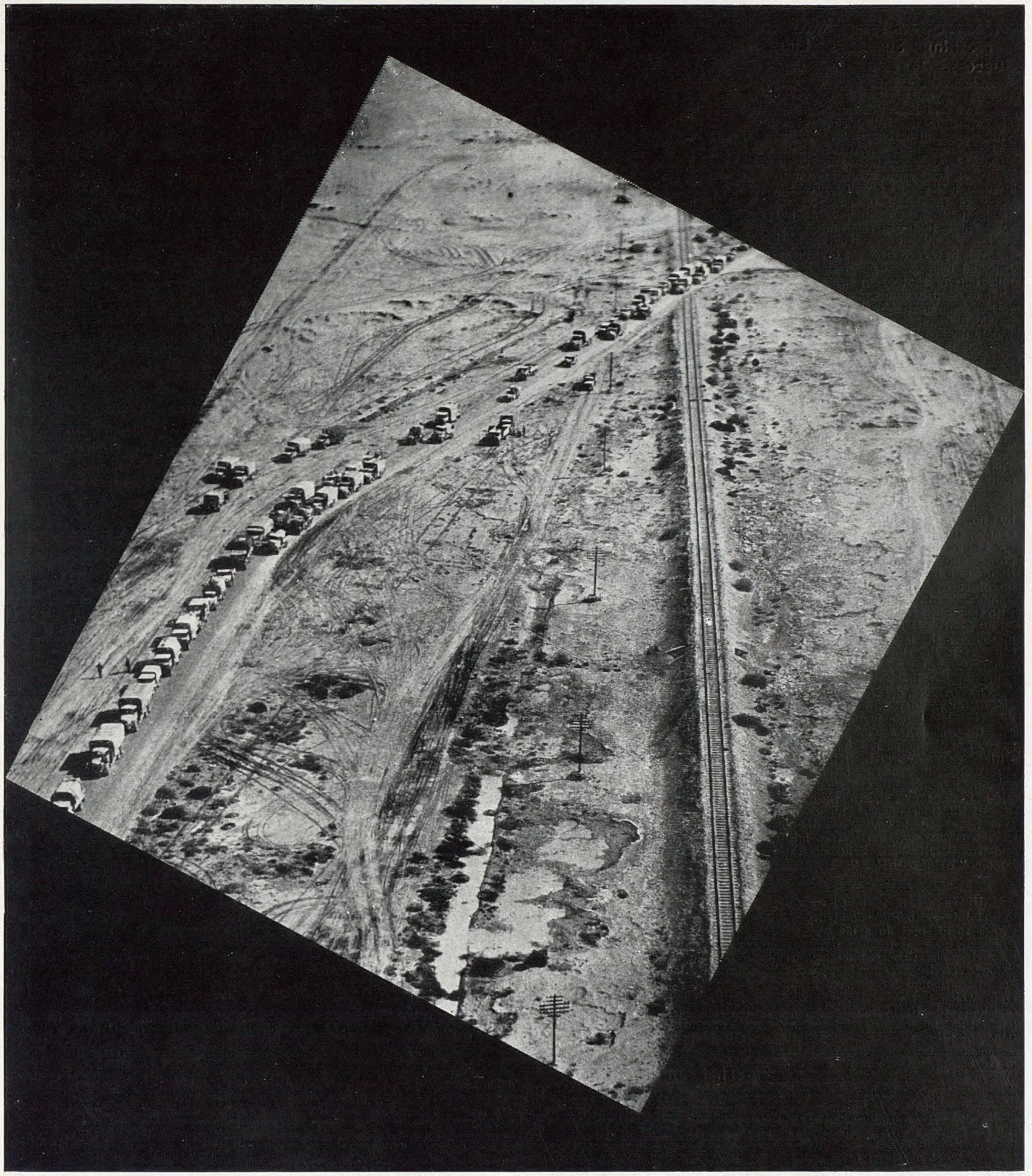
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly



HOT ON THE HEELS OF ROMMEL'S RETREATING AFRIKA KORPS IN LIBYA: THE UNENDING FLOW OF ALLIED CONVOYS streaming westwards through Cyrenaica to reinforce the Eighth Army for their further attacks on the disorganised enemy

One of the outstanding features of the great advance in Egypt and Cyrenaica was the manner in which the supply services were organised so that the advancing Eighth Army was continually reinforced and supplied just at the moment when reinforcement was necessary. The whole advance, carried out with a rapidity hitherto unknown in warfare, was a tremendous triumph of organisation. Much of the work was carried out by convoys of lorries driven across the desert roads, but all branches of the Services co-operated—R.A.F. and Royal Navy, as well as the single-track railway and the R.A.S.C. The above official photograph gives an impression of the scene on the great Coast Road, along which the Allied Convoys are carrying supplies and ammunition ; whilst other special lorries moved whole units westwards. The weather during the advance was not of the best, rain and mud hampering the operations (as, indeed, is indicated in this view) : but the schedule was nevertheless maintained throughout

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A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 170

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Nothing Succeeds Like Success.—In a night, another transformation alters the scene of war. Not one or two, but four or five thousand miles of the coastline of Africa are added to the Allied territory of vital bases and harbours and airfields, and the Axis hold on Africa recedes to what is, comparatively speaking, a pin-point. That strategic Mediterranean triangle is for Hitler well worth the bones of thousands of Fascists and Nazis, if it can be securely held; but reason urges that, with time and energy, that last foothold also must go and the Axis be booted from the Continent, bag and baggage. The strategic implications of that event are too big, obvious and commonplace to need further comment. The psychological implications are not less great, if less widely defined and assessed. Nothing succeeds like success. So long as the scales remain anywhere weighed down in the Axis favour, those doubters nearest the danger-point will cling to the fence and watch the mad bull with terror and respect. But if he be driven and staked off from one corner of the field, down will come the refugees from the redeemed fence-section. The French Colonial Empire has thrown in its lot with the Allies at last, without reserve. The dust has blown away; it can see clearly now, and will by no means reject so great a chance, the last chance, of salvation for France. The mystery of Darlan grows and cries out for explanation. But in the fog of war there is no obscurity over the psychological significance of this decision, coinciding with the growing successes of the Allies on all fronts. It heralds with a crack of thunder the landslide from Hitlerism. It is the clearest warning ever given to a shaken tyrant and a blood-guilty nation that not one of their associates, slaves, dependants, drugged victims or partners in crime is to be "trusted," but one and all will forsake them while the going is good and as soon as the going is safe, and that Hitler's Germany will be left, without a friend, without a supporter, without an ally, without even a sneaking admirer or mourner, to meet the penalty of their unspeakable crimes. Perhaps we shall hear one day of Laval's conversion to the true faith, and from Hitler an echo of that famous "*Est-il possible?*"

Russia Hits Back.—Any uncertainty as to Russia's ability this winter to hit back in a big way was resolved almost as soon as it was expressed. The Caucasus victory was followed up by a resounding success north, south and far west of Stalingrad, which put into the bag whole divisions of Nazi Panzer troops, liquidating in dead, prisoners (not reluctant prisoners) and wounded the cream of the German Army numbered in six figures, with material uncountable and much of it unharmed. The drive continues. It is fraught with danger for both sides, but, whatever be the further outcome, the fruits of this success are garnered already. The possibilities are great. The implications of what has been done are not less great. There are reserves massing on other fronts, the great Axis sea-wall is rotting all along its length. The tremendous speculation arises already, not without fair justification. Is the great Nazi strength and terror already become a façade? Is the great bluff exposed and called sooner than we dared to dream? There are signs of it. Nazis are more prone to surrender; the armies on the Russian front are *not*, after all, equipped to face a Russian winter; the helots are openly grousing and complaining; the transport system is not bearing the strain even in the first stages of the winter campaign. There are signs of oil shortage and shell shortage. There are clear signs that the *Luftwaffe* is overstrained and insufficient to meet a three-front war. But a madman cornered is a madman at his most dangerous. Before the end (and it is far away so long as his huge armies and armaments can withdraw over vast spaces into ever-shortening lines and lines of communication), this evil man will surely resolve to take what vengeance he may on those who robbed him of victory when victory was surest. In his heart he has no enemy the equal of Churchill, no nation which he would more gladly make to suffer again than Britain. I can conceive that, while his power for evil lasts, he will reject no weapon, however horrible, to that end, will sacrifice for that vengeance the last chestnuts in the fire of his political and strategical projects. Before his power for evil ends, he may have to yield some of his powers in the Reich, suffer personal humiliation at the hands of his army and party, but to the very end he will be dangerous, and Britain will be well advised to prepare for a madman's vengeance. No man can dominate the world (as King George V shrewdly wrote down in his diary with the news of the Kaiser's abdication), but a tyrant's power for evil and the poison of his fangs must be reckoned with with ever-increasing watchfulness until his fangs are drawn.

JOINT ANGLO-AMERICAN ACTION AGAINST THE AXIS BEING PLANNED IN WASHINGTON

Once each week, high-ranking officers of the U.S. and British Navy, Army and Air Force in America meet in conference to co-ordinate and further the war effort of the two nations. Many of them are seen here in the Conference Room of the Combined Chiefs of Staff Building in Washington. Starting from the bottom left and continuing round the table are the following: Commander the Hon. R. D. Coleridge, Rear-Admiral W. R. Patterson, Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, Brigadier Vivian Dykes, Lieut.-Gen. G. N. Macready, Air Marshal D. C. S. Evill (the foregoing are all British); Lieut.-Col. T. W. Hammond, Jr., Lieut.-Gen. J. T. McNarnay (Asst. Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army), General George C. Marshall (Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army), Brig.-Gen. J. R. Deane, Admiral William D. Leahy (former U.S. Ambassador in Vichy, and now Chief of Staff to President Roosevelt), Admiral E. J. King (C.-in-C. of the U.S. Fleet) and Vice-Admiral F. J. Horne (Vice-Chief of Naval Operations)

That Initiative.—The expectation, now being expressed, that Hitler will soon enough launch a (possibly desperate but well-prepared) new effort to gain his lost initiative, is reasonable enough. The whole meaning and organisation of his terrible war machine is based, and runs, on aggression and not defence. Hitler at bay and on the defensive is a war god emasculated, an idol whose feet, in repose, are open to inspection for signs of clay. Spain, Turkey, Britain? The pundits lay their pointers here and there, and no doubt those who direct our major strategy never forget the contents of Hitler's locker during this unlooked-for succession of Allied jabs on the Nazi jaw. The victory of the Eighth Army had not been half-digested before Roosevelt's great North African stroke trebled its importance and significance. The crushing defeat of a great Japanese armada off the Solomons and the notable and hopeful advance on Buna by the Anglo-American forces in New Guinea are wresting the initiative at a vital time from the eastern end of the Axis, already preoccupied with the danger of an assault on Burma. These great matters in the Pacific were bonuses of good news, as unexpected as welcome to our minds newly attuned to cheerful strains. As for the latest successes of the Russians, they have come earlier and are more dazzling than the greatest optimist could have hoped. Changes in the British Cabinet clearly foreshadow an intensification of air attack on Germany and Italy and the U-boats, so that it must be clear enough to Hitler that his opponents' whirlwind rally is not to be suffered to peter out into a clinch.

Italy.—Our threats against Italy just now are bloodcurdling, and so are our advance guards of 8,000-pounders. I think, perhaps, we exaggerate the power of bombing to disintegrate a nation and to dissipate its morale. With phlegmatic, calm peoples it has been proved to have a very unifying, stimulating and strengthening effect. The Italians are not phlegmatic, but we ought not to dismiss them, as we often do, as a race of cowards. Properly led and organised, they display courage and resolution of the average. At the moment we believe they are badly led and badly disorganised. However it may have been in the early years of Fascism, when our Ambassadors in Rome were wont to describe the Duce (as Harcourt described Edward VII) as "the greatest man that ever I had speech of," to-day our information suggests that he is a pricked gas-bag, a sick, wobbling, undignified man, and something of a fallen idol. Accordingly, we are justified in taking into account the normal Latin characteristics of the Italians in their reaction to bombs, superimposed, as they are, on war weariness, lack of enthusiasm for the Nazi cause, dissensions in the ranks of Fascism, and a general longing to get out of their ill-timed intervention in a war which proved to be *not all over bar the shouting and looting*. It is difficult, therefore, to resist the expectation that a severe pounding from the air may result in a fine example of poetic justice falling on this nation, whose intervention in the war was the result purely of commercial greed and an expectation of "money for jam." It looks certain that the mass migrations from Genoa, Milan, Turin, and other bombed cities, will spread rumour of doom far and wide; that the lack of welcome shown to evacuees by their still unbombed hosts will create bitterness and trouble; that rapacious rents and callous refusals will seriously affect what unity the nation retains; and that appeals to further efforts, to greater application to the war effort, will fall on deaf ears and despairing hearts. We may reasonably expect conditions in Italy to deteriorate, for the nation's dilemma is obvious. They are in a cleft stick. They are too weak to stand the brunt alone. But if they call on the Nazis for further help (and secure it), they open their gates wider to a race whom they hate, and who despises them.

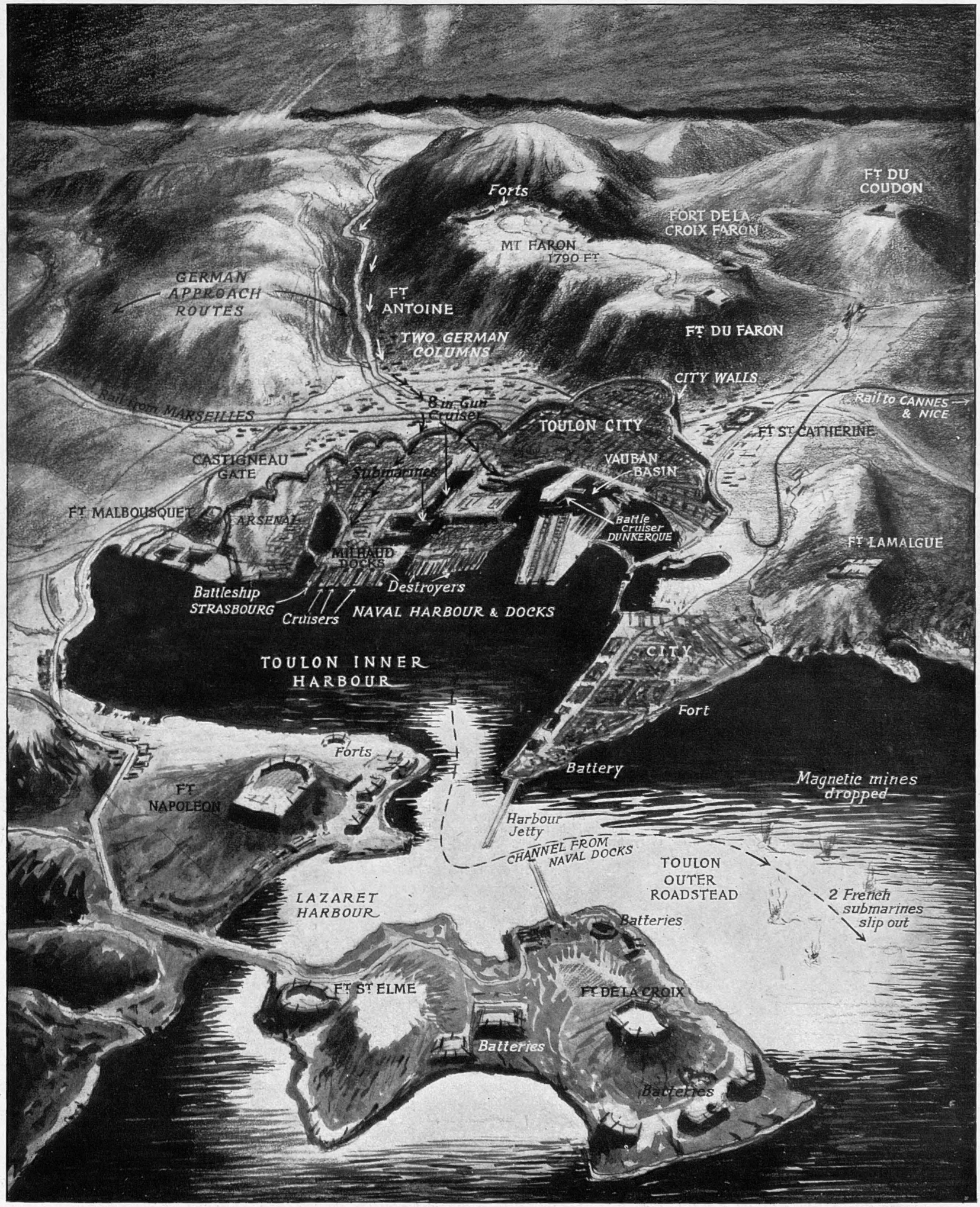
A More Fruitful Field for Threats.—Verginio Gayda, in his padded armchair in temporary security, perceives the dilemma, and his smooth periods reveal that he does so. It is no longer safe to hound on the dogs of war. He finds it safer to warn the Nazis that Italy's grievous danger is Germany's also, and we may yet hear him exploring avenues for some formula which may extricate the Axis, or part of it, from a position which has lost most of its attraction, all hopes of profit, is shorn of its glory and presages a good deal of suffering and unpleasantness. Those periods we should read not without satisfaction. We might be forgiven a chuckle. Well, there for the moment it rests. . . . Italy at least is a more fruitful field for these dragon's teeth (which in principle and in private I am suffered to detest against "all reason") than is Germany. And if we must reluctantly accept it that, despite the unexampled splendour of reticent courage shown by those who deliver the blows, the Junior Service (unlike the Senior Services) cannot carry on without threats and boasts by its political chiefs and Service leaders, it may be these threats and boasts will work more magic on the Italians than they do on the British or the Germans.

THE OLD STAGER

The GERMANS OCCUPY TOULON

To Find the French Fleet Scuttled at its Moorings, On November 27, 1942

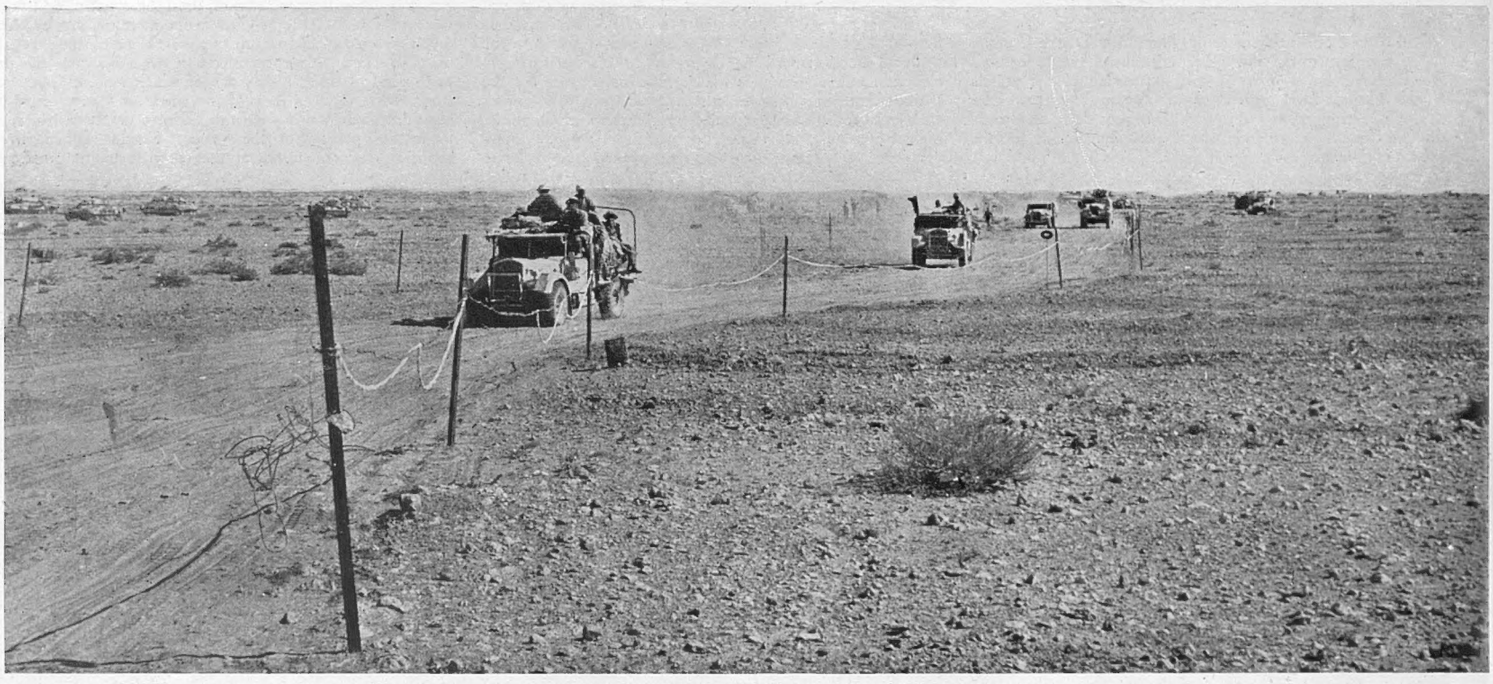
At 4 o'clock on Friday morning, November 27, the German tank formations and other specialised troops entered the Toulon zone in order to take possession of the vessels of the French Fleet assembled in Toulon Harbour. The occupying army rapidly threaded their way down the roads through the high ground which lies immediately at the back of France's great naval base. This main route was flanked by Mount Faron, a limestone mass with precipitous sides: it is crowned with several forts which commanded both the sea and land approaches. The German forces entered the arsenal area which lies to the west of Toulon through the Castigneau Gate (the city is still encircled with its ancient walls). The invaders here divided their forces, one body racing down to the Milhaud Docks, where the battleship *Strasbourg* was lying alongside one of the piers. The other force made for the Vauban Basin, which contained the 26,000-ton battle-cruiser *Dunkerque*, together with several 8-inch gun cruisers, a number of light cruisers, destroyers and corvettes. They were, however, too late. The seacocks had been opened, and explosive charges placed about the vessels so that their destruction should be rapid and certain. Explosion after explosion took place as the orders of the Commander were carried out; clouds of steam and smoke arose as the big vessels heeled over on their sides. In some cases French seamen fired upon the German troops in order to keep them off until the work of destruction was complete. At ten o'clock in the morning, all the vessels lay submerged at their moorings, a great cloud of smoke hanging over the scene. It was reported that two submarines managed to slip out of the harbour, one of which reached Barcelona. Prior to the German forward movement at 4 a.m., flares had been dropped by a big wave of German bombers in order to locate the position of the various vessels. Other aircraft dropped magnetic mines at the entrance to the roadstead



THE OUTER AND INNER HARBOURS AT TOULON, SHOWING WHERE THE BIG VESSELS OF THE FRENCH FLEET LAY AT ANCHOR BEFORE THEY WERE SCUTTLED.
The routes by which the occupying German army approached the port are here indicated—*A Special Sphere drawing by Percy Home*

THE PURSUIT OF ROMMEL'S FLEEING ARMY IN EGYPT

Recently-arrived Pictures which Demonstrate the Disorganisation of the German and Italian Forces After the Collapse of Their Line

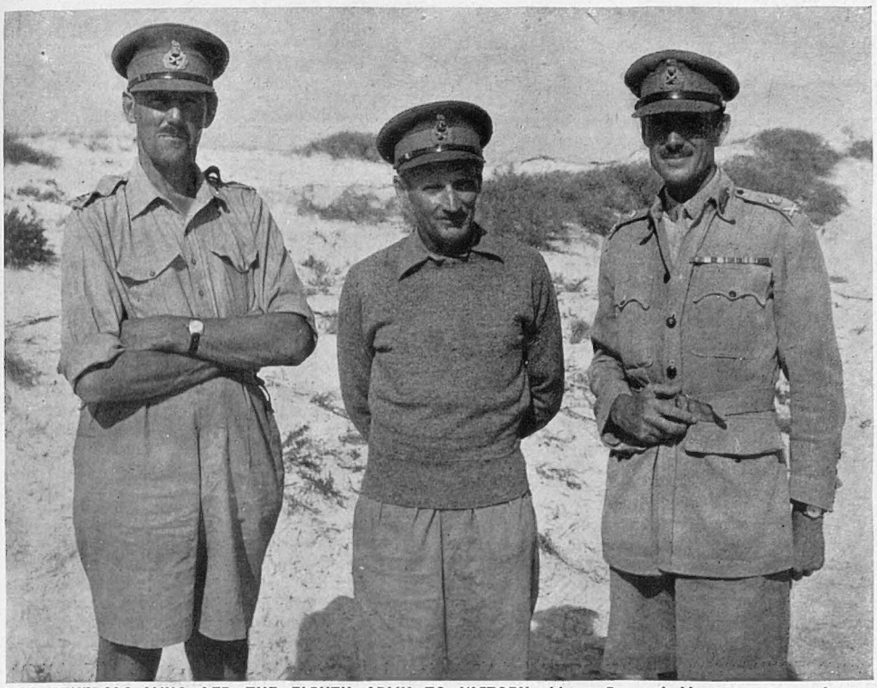


HOW THE ENEMY'S MINEFIELDS WERE MARKED, SO THAT THE BRITISH SUPPLY COLUMNS COULD GO THROUGH. The location of the mines was the work of the Royal Engineers, who played an heroic part in our first break-through. As soon as a pathway was cleared by them, stakes were driven into the ground and tapes then marked the path to which the lorries had to adhere. Rommel depended on his minefields to hold up our advance: British Sappers rendered his hopes illusory, for within a few hours the Eighth Army was again in full cry after the retreating Afrika Korps

MEN OF A REGIMENT FROM THE HOME COUNTIES inspecting an Italian position which was abandoned during the great bombardment which preceded the advance by our Infantry. The litter everywhere was appalling

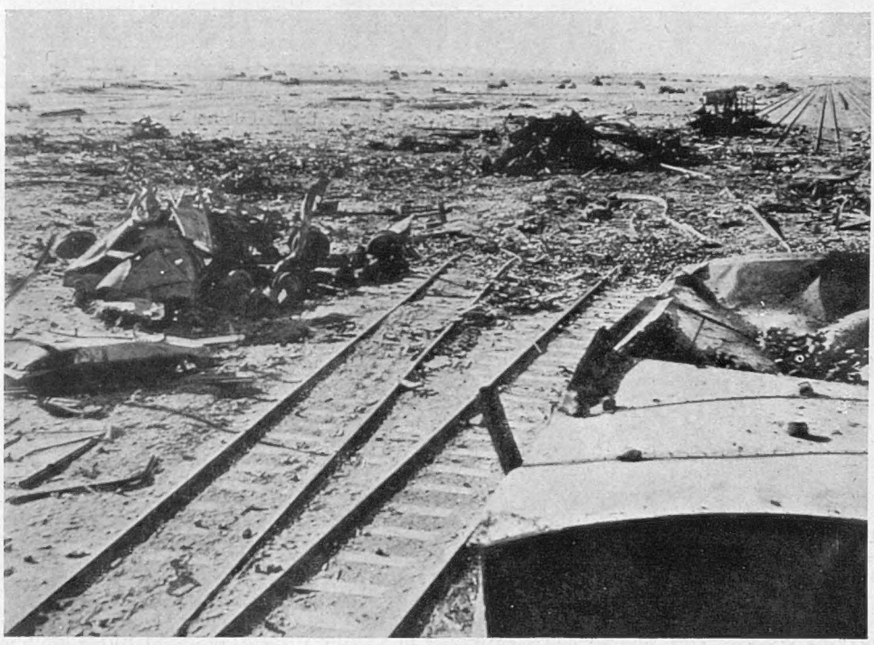
DAMAGED ROLLING-STOCK AND ABANDONED ENEMY SUPPLIES AT DABA STATION. Day after day the Eighth Army pursued the remnants of Rommel's shattered Afrika Korps to the west. Soon the headlong retreat became a rout—and that long before they had left Egyptian territory. In their flight, equipment of all kinds—including tanks, guns and aircraft—was abandoned wholesale, to say nothing of the poor Italians, who were left to their fate by their erstwhile Allies! The litter everywhere was appalling: an attempt to picture and describe this aspect of the Great Retreat is given on pages 301-3 of this issue

On left—**GENERAL GRANT TANKS** ploughing through a wet and muddy stretch of the road after heavy rain. *On right*—**SPECIAL BRITISH VEHICLES** used for levelling airfields take a flooded stretch in their stride. At the height of the Allied pursuit of the Axis forces, heavy rain fell in the Western Desert, turning the sand and dust into mud and flooding low-lying parts. It made things difficult for the Axis, but even more so for the British troops speeding across the desert trying to cut off the enemy columns moving along the coast road



THE GENERALS WHO LED THE EIGHTH ARMY TO VICTORY—Lieut.-General Montgomery and two of his Corps Commanders on the field of battle : On the left is Lieut.-General Sir Oliver Leese, C.B.E., D.S.O., Commander of the 30th Corps. He is forty-eight years of age : in December 1940 he was promoted Major-General and two months later was transferred to the command of a Division. In September, 1942 he was promoted Lieut.-General, and went to the Middle East to assume his present command. Lieut.-General Herbert Lumsden, D.S.O., M.C. (on the right), is the Commander of the 10th Corps. He is forty-five years of age. After service in France and the Low Countries, he was promoted Major-General in October, 1941, when he was appointed to command a Division. Within a fortnight he was transferred from this appointment to the Command of the 1st Armoured Division, already in the Middle East. He was promoted Lieut.-General and appointed to command the 10th Corps in August last

MR. CASEY VISITS THE DESERT BATTLE AREA : The Minister of State with General Alexander, C.-in-C., Middle East, watching a dog-fight in the sky



ONE OF THE THINGS WHICH BROKE DOWN THE ENEMY'S MORALE. The effect of a direct hit on a German ammunition train in the desert. So great was the explosion that pieces of the railway wagons were found half a mile from the railway line

THREE LANCE-CORPORALS OF THE CORPS OF MILITARY POLICE who, unaided, captured 300 Italian prisoners. They are Lance-Corporals Brookfield, Gunn and Gubb, and here they are seen with a few of their not-unwilling Axis captives

A GERMAN PLANE WHICH CRASHED just in front of elements of the advancing Eighth Army. Although it was not badly damaged, the enemy made no attempt to destroy it

THESE PRISONERS CAME INTO OUR LINES TO SURRENDER OF THEIR OWN ACCORD : It will be noticed that they came in in style—towed by one of the tracked motor-cycles which were used by Rommel to tow guns and ammunition and men through the desert

THE FRENCH ARMY OF NORTH AFRICA

How it Has Been Built Up and its Present Principal Components Described by FERDINAND TUOHY

THE last time I saw the French Army of North Africa on parade, it was a memorable enough occasion, for less than a dozen paces from me stood Daladier—and Darlan. January 1939. We had journeyed 300 miles south from Bizerta to the heart of the Mareth Line, fronting Libya. As Defence Minister, Daladier had sanctioned this four-mile-deep barrier of forts and strong-points amid hills, and what a reception Tunis gave him, and Darlan, and General Georges, later Field Commander-in-Chief in France; and General Vuillemin, head of the French Air Force! Galas and tears of joy! At Sousse, Sfax, El Djemm, it was Tunis repeated on a smaller scale.

Said a Foreign Legion officer at Sousse: "It must be the biggest personal success since Clemenceau." "A plebiscite of the heart," cabled American colleagues among 137,000 words wired from desert-edged Gabes. That was the night of the review in the Mareth Line, 20,000 of "Real Africa," as on the films. Only, as we advised the G.O.C., he had beaten Hollywood hollow for setting. "I chose it myself with care," chuckled that wiry little cavalryman. He had chosen a magnificent mountain background with gaps of bluest sky intervening; and across this drop-scene of purest Mediterranean Africa, we watched the Army of North Africa go by for many hours. It was a brilliant day, but with a cold wind, and Darlan and company were lucky in their big review-tent made of black camel-hair.

That review proved a composite of all who had figured in *Under Two Flags*, *Beau Geste*, *The Desert Song* and *The Four Feathers*. Great things were expected of this Army, which had always been an institution on its own, separate from the Metropolitan and Colonial Armies. This North African Army had a *panache* all its own to sustain, and it then numbered perhaps 200,000 men, not counting irregulars—this for the whole area from Casablanca to Tripolitania. General Noguès was to have commanded in chief, and a few months later, in April 1939, I found at Gibraltar that he had already entered into talks with General Ironside, lately brought to the Rock from brief authority in Cairo. General Ironside's opinion was:

"Let us make ready our Middle East Area and with the French in North Africa concert our plans. It means a clear understanding between the two Governments, and permission to their staffs to complete details. It means secrecy. It means honest co-operation. And both these the French and ourselves have achieved before." Alas! the necessary vision did not then prevail in high Entente places, with the net effect that, when France broke, quite insufficient had been prepared between Britain and North Africa, which proceeded to sink into a stay-out attitude none the less highly dangerous to the Allies. It is this stay-out attitude which has now come to an end, so that the time is ripe to review again the French North African forces, as General Giraud hopes to recast, purge and mobilise them in the joint cause of France and her would-be liberators.

For one takes it in the first place that General Giraud is the man. He is the only one to collect bouquets from both camps of Frenchmen. The most influential French soldiers, on their past showing in North Africa, are indisputably Giraud, Noguès and Catroux. Giraud commanded the Zouaves in a memorable action at Malmaison, twenty-five years ago. His next victory with African troops was in 1925, when he took Abd-el-Krim's surrender. Nine years later, he and Catroux, operating in two columns, contrived the last of "pacification" deep across the Great Atlas. The two soldiers built a motor-road to make sure of this last effort against wild tribesmen strewn over hundreds of miles of mountain fastnesses.

General Catroux was born in Algiers, and has had long experience of North Africa. Holding the same rank as Giraud—Army Commander—he is an old personal friend of the latter's. General Noguès has to be taken with some reserve yet. He also can call himself an "old Moroccan," for having been called there by the great Lyautey as long as thirty years ago. Noguès had earlier been a survey officer in Algeria. He rose to command the vulnerable Fez section against the Riffians, and later to head the Officers of Native Affairs, a most important company, with whom the Anglo-American staffs have doubtless sought the closest union.

These Officers of Native Affairs—political officers, only more so—are the mainstays of the whole French administration. There must be several thousands of them located between the far Atlas in the west, and Ben Gardane, facing Tripoli. When not in the built-up areas, they are mostly established singly in blockhouses, and they range into the perilous depths of the Saharan fringe. They were explained to me as "part hermit, part escapist, wholly 'African,' of great physical and mental endurance, in order not to crumple in their protracted loneliness. Officially, their job is to keep a finger on the native pulse. In fact, they emerge as judge, doctor, builder, engineer, agricultural expert, business manager, guide and councillor for their tribal element. The tribes will follow these white men before any others. In particular, the *Goumiers* will do so."

So next meet the *Goumiers*, a picturesque host, playing a large part in the French North African Army. The *Goumiers* are mounted irregular volunteers who like to kill legally. They are paid for their services and for the keep of their mounts, and they delight in the sack-like "uniforms" granted them by the French. Their women and children follow the *Goumiers* about in mobile camps, or *douars*. For the whole of French North Africa, as many as 200,000 *Goumiers* could be summoned, and from as far as the *Régions du Sud*. This is the only locality for your truly bitten "Saharan," and French officers live even down here, watching the natives.

In order to visualise the North African Army, it is necessary to forget all about such colonial fighting material as that hailing from Indo-China and Tonkin, Madagascar, the West Indies, the French Sudan, the Ivory Coast, the Upper Volta, mandated Togoland and the Cameroons. Those all come under the Colonial Army. But one component of the latter has been regularly incorporated in the North African Army: the Senegalese. We should hear more of these, especially as from 40,000 to 50,000 well-trained "Sikis" may come over to the Allies if the Senegal-Dakar scheme with Darlan works. The coal-black "Sikis" are rated among the best of all French coloured soldiers, especially for policing and controlling purposes. They are impervious to religious or any other propaganda.

The "Sikis" have one point in common with American negroes. They owe their origin to the abolition of slavery under Napoleon III, whose most successful soldier, Faidherbe, then on the West Coast, recruited regiments from liberated blacks not knowing where to turn. The "Sikis'" proudest achievement was to hold Morocco for Lyautey throughout the last war; 20,000 of them only, but strung out in one gigantic hoodwinking. Twice that number fought bravely in France, and it can be said without reserve that if the "Sikis" are told by their own officers to do so again, or to cross to Italy or elsewhere, they will obey without hesitation.

The principal components of the Army of North Africa, in order of seniority, are the Chasseurs d'Afrique, who led the way for Marshal Bugeaud's conquest of Algeria 112 years ago, and later had "Ouida" as godmother; the Zouaves and Turcos, kindred pioneers; the Spahis, native horsemen in flowing burnous; the Tirailleurs, or Riflemen, forming the basic units of Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan enrolment; the Foreign Legion; the Camel Corps, riding dromedaries, in contact with the last fierce unpacified ones; and the "Zephyrs," or "*bats d'Af*," a light infantry, white and coloured, such as only France could produce, since all are ex-criminals, and not a few serve their sentences in the ranks.

A force comprised of most of the foregoing was sent to Syria to serve under Weygand at the beginning of the war. Against the wishes of his successor, General Mittelhauser, this small army espoused Vichy, and later fought us for four weeks. Whereupon, about 6,000, I believe, came over to the Fighting French, the while we repatriated three or four times that number to France. Not a few of these left subsequently to serve in North Africa, so that if they have now come over to the Allies, it is only poetically just that they should! Others who remained in France may all too easily be tempted into joining Laval's "African Falange" for North Africa, though, personally, I doubt if this recruitment for active service will much exceed the tiny numbers that went to the Russian front.

The Army of North Africa which Giraud is trying to forge anew under watchful Allied eyes, has a record as the forcing ground of famous generals, and engrained in its units is the spirit of the guerilla, by means of which an armed peace has been brought to fertile lands through a thousand little epics of the *bled*; by forced marches over burning sands, by body to body fighting in palm groves, through defiles and on bleak crags, by stormings of earthenred forts. And ever in the wake of the fighting, the building of camps, roads, fortifications. In 1939, some doubt existed as to the future of the Foreign Legion, and, on enquiring why, one learnt that it was becoming dangerously unoccupied. No more "little wars," not even much more building. North Africa had been too lavishly constructed, as it was, and the only form of building on the skyline was further road construction, of which the Legion had had a surfeit.

Clearly the greatest care will need to be taken in preparing this Army for future action on the Allied side. The chance of even part of it taking advantage of an Allied slip-up in North Africa has to be firmly guarded against. This Army will want to be along with the unmistakable winners, and so will the population, if only on account of the severe air-strafing being visited on it after such blissful immunity. Fortunately, the Allies hold the strong-places and airfields, the ports and forts, junctions and defiles. And none save authorised folk may carry weapons. Furthermore, the various liable classes of Europeans have been called up for service (only a few Arabs who are French citizens are subject to conscription). Yet every precaution that can be thought of is justified, in view of the Vichy-Fascism with which North Africa has been drenched.

Given a hand-combing of all North African units and a continuation of Allied success along the Southern Mediterranean, one sees small reason why General Giraud and his fellow artificers (not least General Leclerc on Chad, and, of course, the Fighting French of General de Gaulle everywhere), could not form a fine expeditionary force of two or more corps for overseas service aimed at the Axis wherever it is to be found.

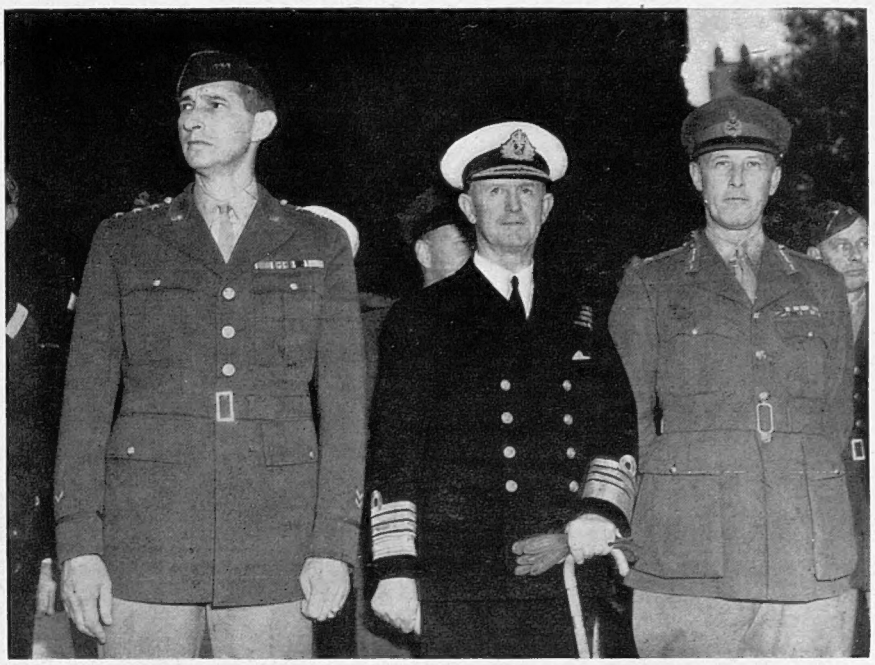
AFTER THE OCCUPATION OF FRENCH NORTH AFRICA: A scene in Algiers. This Senegalese band, composed of native musicians drawn from France's Colonial troops, lined up to play the "Marseillaise," and then "Over There," in the main street of the city

The Shaftesbury Homes and "Arethusa" Training Ship

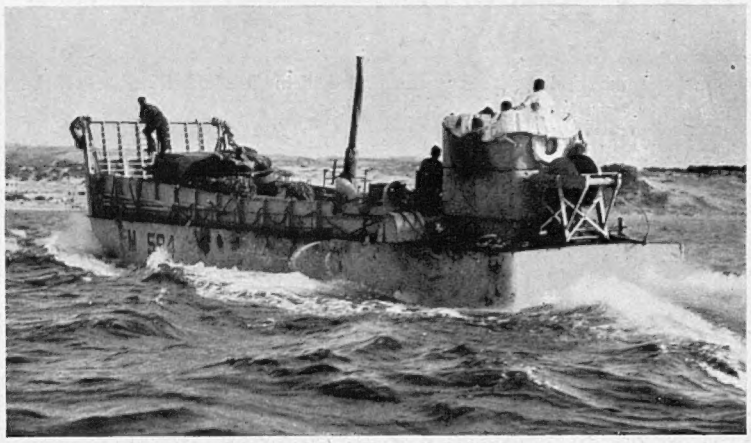
CHRISTMAS—the Children's Festival. Eight hundred or more eager faces will be watching for what Santa Claus will bring—children in the Homes of this Society. Did YOU have a happy Christmas when a child? Then please send a memory gift and so ensure happiness for one or more of these children. The Headquarters address is: 164, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.C.2.

MORE PICTURES FROM NORTH AFRICA

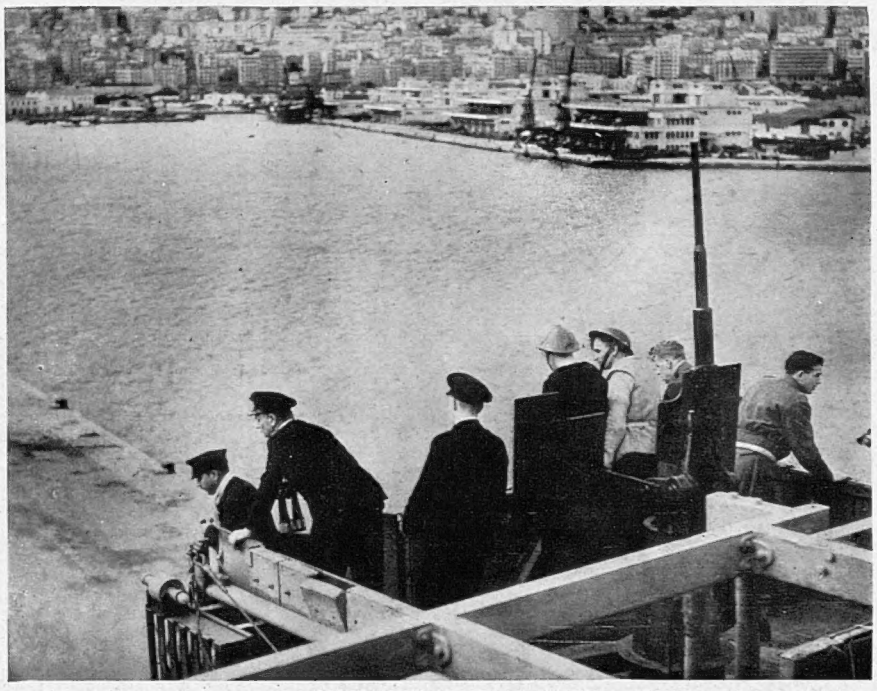
BRITISH SAILORS TAKE U.S. TROOPS ASHORE: This picture gives a good impression of the landing craft used for the purpose: it also shows the size of some of the transport vessels used to convey the troops to North Africa



THE ALLIED FLAG HOISTED IN ALGERIA: The U.S. General Clark (Deputy to General Eisenhower), Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, and Lieut.-General K. A. N. Anderson at the hoisting of the flag over the Allied Headquarters. Admiral Darlan was also present at this ceremony



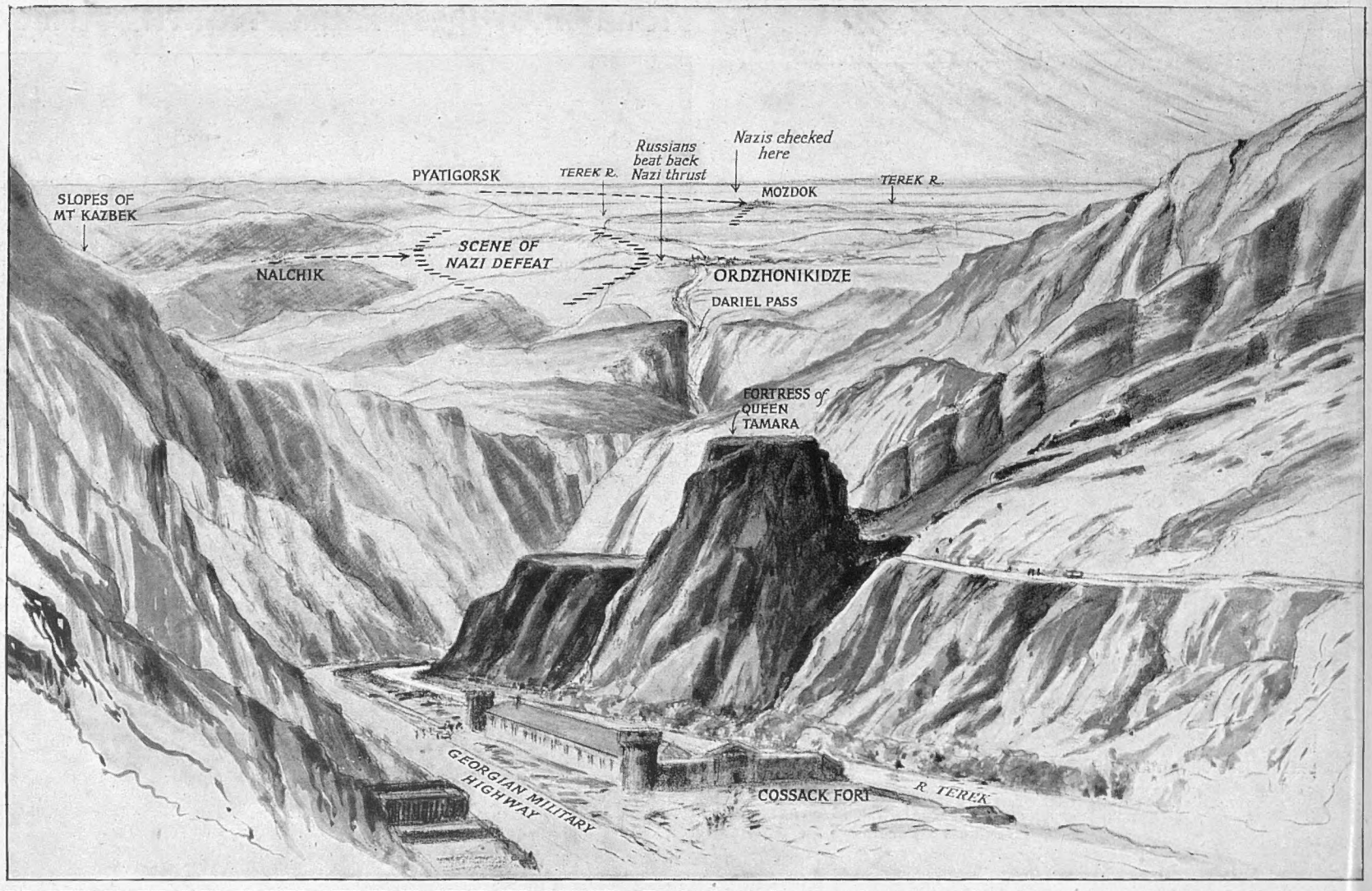
CARRYING SUPPLIES ASHORE AFTER THE LANDINGS: A landing craft, with stores and light guns, on its way to the beach at Algiers. These are well-built vessels, specially constructed for the purpose



PUTTING INTO THE HARBOUR AT ALGIERS: An Allied transport is taken in to the quayside under the guidance of a French pilot

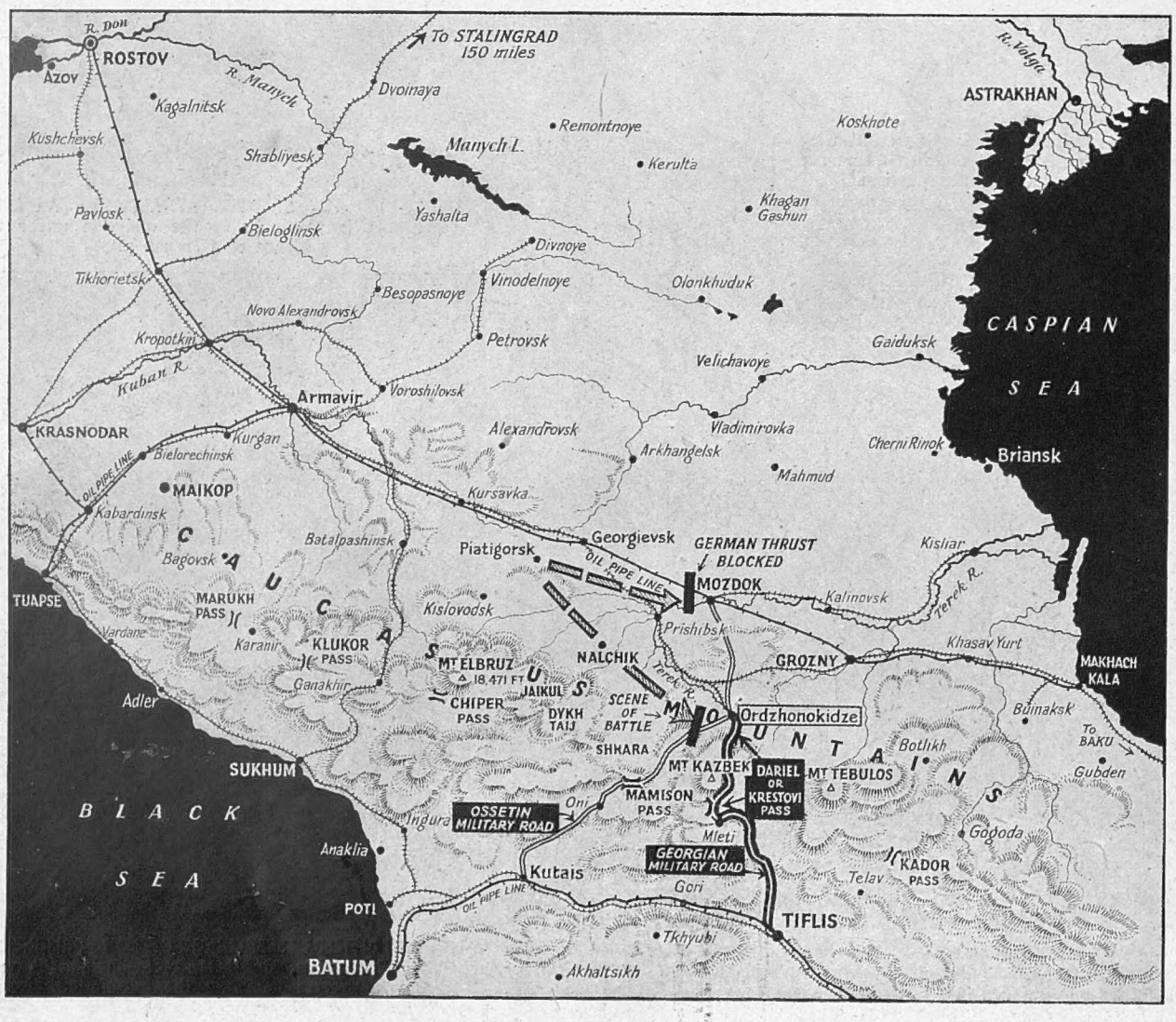
AMERICAN TROOPS LANDING LIGHT GUNS AT ARZEU, NEAR ORAN. This was one of the spots where a great number of transport vessels were brought up to discharge equipment and supplies. A vast convoy was ultimately unladen here without interference

AMERICAN OFFICERS SEARCHING GERMAN PRISONERS—Fifth Columnists, Quislings, etc.—during the mopping-up process following the occupation of Oran



THE CHECK TO THE NAZIS IN THEIR ATTEMPT TO PIERCE THE CAUCASUS : The battle at the mountain gateway which ended in a serious defeat of the German forces at the Dariel Pass—*Drawing by Percy Home*

The battle of Ordzhonokidze, the Vladikavkas of former days, came about as the result of the failure of the German southern armies to force their way through Mozdok to the oil wells of Grozny. The route lay on comparatively low ground to the north of the Great Caucasian Range with its 17,000 to 18,000-ft. peaks ; in spite of easier conditions, the Germans were unable to pierce the reinforced lines of the Russian defending army. Foiled after repeated attempts, the German command determined on an effort still further to the south, on a radial line from Pyatigorsk. The line of attack took the Nazis to the lower granite foothills of the Caucasus, and at the head of a valley between these protruding fingers, entered Nalchik. After this first success, due doubtless to the initial impulse of the attack, the German forces marched forward to positions commanding Ordzhonokidze and the entrance to the famous Dariel Pass, itself the gateway to the Georgian Military Highway. The foaming River Terek, which chafes its way through the pass and the roadway, lay in front of them. So determined was the resistance of the Russians and so, possibly, ill-placed were the Nazi forces, that the Germans suffered a really serious defeat. The number of the killed and wounded and of the prisoners, tanks, guns, and military stores all attest to the weight of the blow delivered by the Russians. The area in which this struggle took place is indicated in the drawing above. The Dariel Pass is in its first stage a narrow cleft, which opens out a little when the old Cossack fort is reached.



The Enemy in the Caucasus

DEFEATED at the GATEWAY to the DARIEL PASS

The Germans Foiled in Their Desperate Efforts to Gain Winter Quarters Amongst the High Mountains

—Special Drawings and Maps

AFTER several weeks of intense and bitter fighting, the Russians have just gained a decisive victory over the Axis forces massed around the Upper Terek River, in the Central Caucasus, where the enemy was trying to secure Ordzhonokidze to complete their strong-points for the winter.

Baffled at Stalingrad, the Germans had been trying to force a decision in the Central Caucasus, where they had massed ten divisions of infantry and two Panzer divisions. They have been almost within sight of the Grozny oilfields since the beginning of September, yet have failed to reach their great objective. After the disastrous fall of Rostov, which had been expected to stand after the manner of Odessa, the Germans found the door open into the Caucasus. Their troops poured through and overran the Kuban plain, meeting little resistance. In their customary manner, the mobile troops rushed ahead, followed rapidly by tanks and infantry,

On left—

CAUCASIAN STRATEGICS : Where the Germans have met with fresh disaster in the Dariel Pass. This map shows the area where recent fighting has been taking place up amongst the lofty passes of the Caucasus Mountains. The scene of the Nazi defeat at Dariel is shown in the drawing at the top of this page

capturing place after place. The army divided into two sections, one going west towards the Black Sea, and the other moving south-east towards the Caspian Sea. Day after day told of further advance, till the eastern army was reaching the foothills of the Central Caucasus, and Grozny, with its precious, much-needed oil was almost within grasp.

It was here they met a firm resistance at last. The Russian Army had re-formed and was standing on the southern bank of the Terek River, which tears down from the Caucasus Mountains, in foaming turbulence, through a lovely, wooded valley. Against the stubborn force of the Red Army the Axis attacks have failed again and again. Throughout September and October they failed to make any progress, and suffered great losses among their best troops.

On the last days of October, after a period of stagnation, the enemy made a new offensive, concentrating their forces towards the south, in the Baksan River district, where the Russians were forced to withdraw. They had gained Nalchik by October 30, an important centre for them, being the terminus of a branch line from Kotlyarevskaya, and probably destined to be part of their winter defensive line. It was stormed by Rumanian and German Alpine troops. From Nalchik they pressed on to Almagir, which they captured on November 3—another terminus of a recently-built line from Darkotch, and also dangerously near one of the approaches to the Mamison Pass. They were then threatening Ordzhonokidze, guarding the pass into the mountains, and dominated by the huge peak of Kazbek (16,000 ft.). The Dariel Pass here leads to the great military road over the Caucasus, and down into the fertile district of Transcaucasia and Baku.

The question of crossing these snow-covered mountains in the winter season presents a serious, if not impossible, problem. Even light cars would find it extremely difficult in face of thick snow and fierce blizzards, while heavy transport would almost inevitably be blocked. If rumour is correct, the enemy is already very short of fuel, not having reached the rich supplies expected, and this alone would stop any prospect of crossing the Caucasus in force. Though the German Alpine troops are said to be the best in the world, and are found by the Russians to be very well equipped, they cannot clear the mountain passes for the army, though they might seize strategic points ready for the spring.

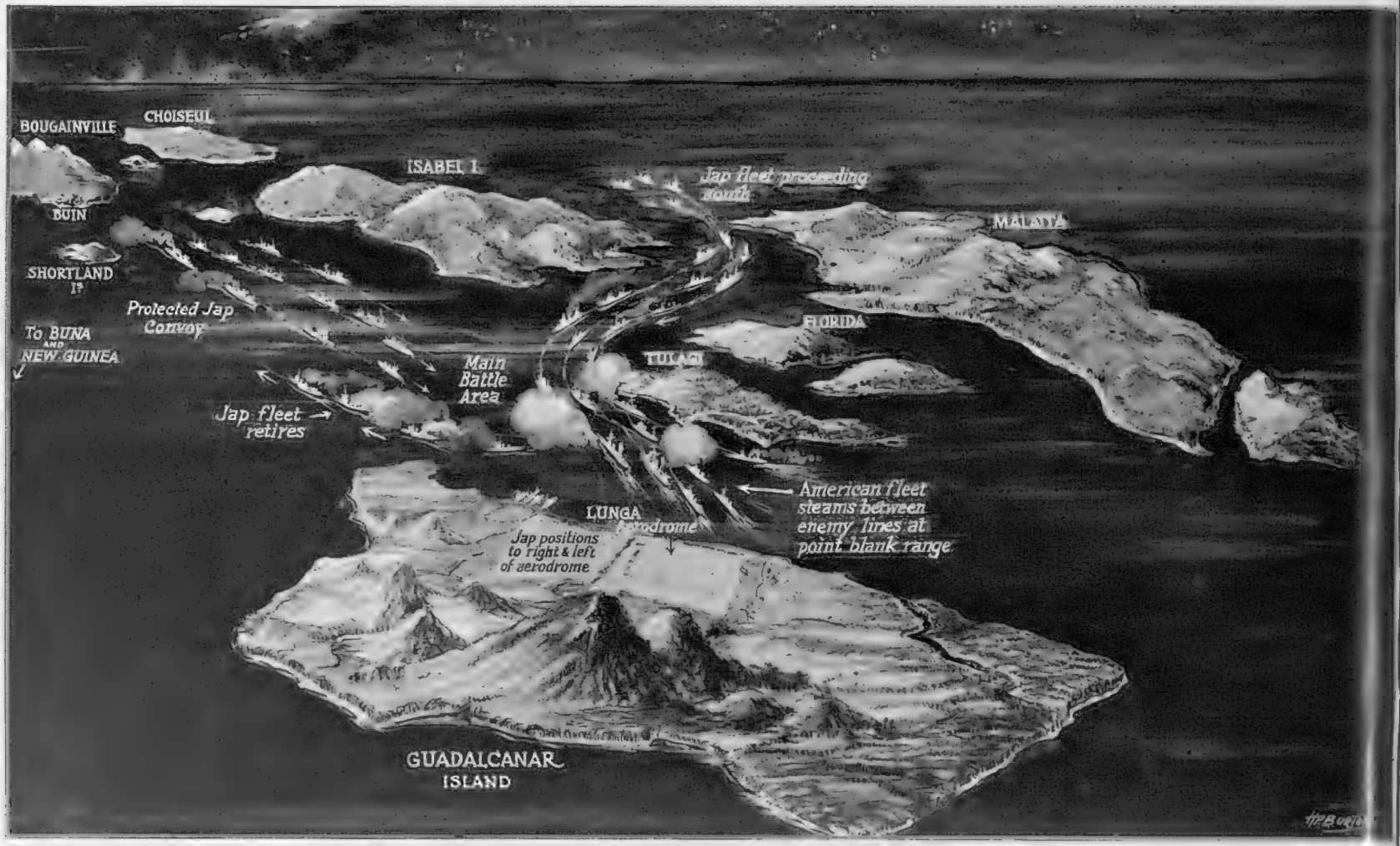
When the Germans made their determined attack upon Ordzhonokidze, pressing forward with much armoured strength, they at first had considerable success, breaking through the defence lines of the Soviet Army and getting dangerously near the city. The Russians, however, managed to hold on till reinforcements arrived, when, gathering a strong attacking force, they outflanked the enemy, pressing them against the mountains, where they pounded them with artillery mortars, till the Germans could stand no more. They broke into precipitous flight, leaving more than a hundred tanks behind. Thousands of Germans lay everywhere.

Lack of fuel, together with the bogging of the tanks in the deep, soft snow, had caused the Germans their disastrous loss. Most of the tanks were uninjured, but could not be moved. Fuel has had to be carried great distances, for the Nazi dream of abundance of petrol in the Caucasus has not been realised. Not a drop has been obtained from the Maikop wells, which were so efficiently destroyed that the German experts have not yet succeeded in putting them in order. One small well was just about to produce oil, when a guerilla band in the neighbourhood pounced down upon it and wrecked it again, killing the Soviet quislings who had been assisting the enemy. So severe has been this Caucasus defeat that it is not likely that any further attempt will be made to gain the Grozny oilfields till the winter is over.

THE HIGH PEAKS OF THE CAUCASUS, grouped between Mount Elbruz and Mount Kazbek. The latter is one of the best-known peaks of this region, as it flanks the famous Dariel Pass, which has for centuries been the chief connecting-link between Tiflis and the rest of Russia by means of the great Georgian Military Highway

HOW THE RUSSIANS HAVE BEEN WAGING WARFARE IN THE MOUNTAINOUS REGIONS AROUND TUAPSE: The use of trench mortars in mass formation, and hand-grenades by the hundred, across the mountain's "spine" as the enemy advances to the attack—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

In the wild, hilly country of the Caucasus foothills, the main weapons used by the Russian defenders have proved to be trench mortars and hand-grenades. Using trench mortars in mass formation, the Germans were recently able to take several heights on the Tuapse road. But all Russian infantry units operating in this sector also have trench-mortar detachments. Their most effective tactic has been developed in simultaneous fire from the rear slope of a hill, so that the mortar bombs fly over the summit and land on the slopes up which the enemy is struggling. Immediately after a salvo has been fired, the trench-mortar men change their positions. One of the trench-mortar groups usually keeps close to the commander to deal with special tasks. Along the narrow valleys and paths both sides make use of mines and other traps. The mortar has come very greatly to the forefront in the present war: in Libya, especially, its possibilities were largely exploited. A few days ago, in connection with the North African landings and subsequent operations, General Eisenhower disclosed that a new U.S. infantry mortar was used at Oran. "It was a most accurate weapon," he declared. "It could land a shell on a dime, and it speedily put a fort out of action!"



THE SMASHING NAVAL VICTORY WHEN THE JAP FLEET WAS DRIVEN OUT OF GUADALCANAR WATERS: A pictorial diagram which shows how the enemy approached, with two naval forces protecting an invasion convoy, and how they were beaten back by the American fleet with heavy losses

THE CRUSHING OF JAP NAVAL POWER IN THE SOLOMONS

The U.S. Navy Sink 11 Enemy Warships and 12 Transports

Special Sphere Drawings and Diagrams

On Thursday, November 12, a Japanese naval force was approaching the island of Guadalcanar, in the Solomons (held by the Americans), from the north, between Isabel and Florida Islands: at the same time, another force—a protected Japanese convoy—was coming down from the north-west. On November 13, the Jap fleet from the north was caught by a surprise U.S. naval attack in the darkness: the American fleet steamed between the enemy's lines, firing at point-blank range, and so great was the confusion that Jap ships were seen to be firing at each other. At dawn on the same day the Jap fleet had turned away to the north, being pursued by U.S. bombers. The same afternoon the Jap convoy from the north-west was sighted; and that night the escort vessels of the convoy were shelling the U.S. positions on Guadalcanar. But not for long—because, on the morning of the 14th, the U.S. bombers struck once again. Eight of the transports were sunk, and the remainder went ashore and were also destroyed. In all, eleven enemy warships and twelve transports were sunk, and 24,000 enemy troops drowned

AN AERIAL VIEW OF TANAMBAGO ISLAND, IN THE SOLOMONS, after U.S. warplanes had hammered at it from the air. Note the wrecked piers in the foreground and the damaged fronts of the buildings. This attack was launched during the drive to oust the Japs from the Islands: later came the attempt at the sea-borne invasion, described on these pages, which was driven off with such heavy losses to the attackers

***Below*—HOW THE UNITED STATES CRUISER "SAN FRANCISCO" TOOK ON THE WHOLE OF THE JAP FLEET in the naval battle in the Solomons**—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

Rear-Admiral Daniel J. Callaghan (formerly C.-in-C. of the Pacific Fleet) was commander of the Task Force which attacked the spearhead of the Jap fleet attempting the reinforcement of the Guadalcanar area. His flagship, the cruiser *San Francisco*, sailed right into the enemy fleet—her guns blazing at point-blank range. She engaged and hit three enemy vessels, sinking one of them; she then silenced a battleship's big guns, and so disabled the latter that she could be sunk by torpedoes from destroyers and aircraft. The *San Francisco* was herself hit many times; her bridge was hit by shells from the Jap battleship's 14-inch guns, and Admiral Callaghan was killed. The vessel was, however, brought safely back to port by her Lieut.-Commander. The *San Francisco* is one of eight similar U.S. cruisers, all built about 1938. She has a displacement of 9,950 tons, and is armed with nine 8-inch guns, eight 5-inch A.-A. guns and ten smaller weapons. The high erection aft is the hangar, which, in this class, houses four aircraft. In the drawing below, the *San Francisco* is seen on the right; on the left is a Jap battleship of the Huso class; and above a squadron of U.S. bombers are sweeping in to drop their torpedoes

A Flying Fortress soars over a volcano and a crater lake on Bougainville Island, as it heads for Shortland Harbour to attack Japanese shipping after it had taken part in a raid on an enemy airfield at Buka

U.S. heavy bombers, after bombing the Jap airfield at Buka, on Bougainville Island, head for Shortland Harbour, at the southern end of the island, to attack a big concentration of enemy shipping

THE SINKING OF THE JAPANESE BATTLESHIP "KONGO" AND AN ENEMY CRUISER DURING THE SOLOMONS BATTLE—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

The spearhead of the Japanese attack was a force composed of two battleships of the Kongo class, and a number of other vessels believed to have been two heavy cruisers, four light cruisers and about ten destroyers. Of these, a battleship, three heavy and two light cruisers and five destroyers were sunk. The Kongo class battleships have a displacement of 29,330 tons, and a complement of 980. They have eight 14-inch and sixteen 6-inch guns. They were completed in 1915. Our artist Mr. McDowell worked on the designing of this vessel during her building here in 1911-12, and was present at her launch. She was at that time regarded as equal to anything of similar tonnage in the world. She was extensively altered by the Japanese in 1926-30

The "ONE-SHIP FLEET" in the SOLOMONS

The Epic of the U.S. Light Cruiser "Boise"

THE United States "One-Ship Fleet"—the light cruiser *Boise*—returned home a few days ago from the Solomons, where, on October 11 and 12 (before the U.S. victory recorded on the preceding pages) she sank two heavy Japanese cruisers, one light cruiser and three destroyers.

Outnumbered in her attempt to check the reinforcement of Guadalcanar by the enemy, the *Boise* took brutal punishment. She received eleven "straddles," while one 8-in. shell pierced her hull 9 ft. under the water-line, and her superstructure was riddled.

High flames enveloped her, and she was given up for lost by the attacking Task Force—but, after two hours, the *Boise* appeared out of the darkness, steaming at 20 knots. Her crew flooded her magazine, extinguished the fires, shored up the wavering bulkheads, and plugged the shell-holes with bedding.

VICE-ADMIRAL HALSEY, the U.S. naval Commander in the Solomons, on the bridge of his ship, after routing the Jap armada off the Solomons

The terse Navy Department report said: "A Task group, of which the *Boise* was a member, was ordered to do the job of preventing the Japanese reinforcement of Guadalcanar. It did."

In a 27-minute battle the *Boise*, falling behind the main body of the Task Force, set on fire and sank a heavy cruiser of the Nati class. Almost simultaneously she sank a Japanese destroyer. A minute later she sank a second Japanese destroyer, after causing an explosion.

In four minutes, after several violent explosions, a two-funnelled Japanese cruiser sank. Two minutes later the *Boise* sighted and sank another Japanese destroyer. Finally, with other United States warships, she blew up and sank by shelling yet another Japanese heavy cruiser.

In the upper of the two drawings reproduced on the right, note the square stern of the *Boise*, the catapults and the crane for lifting aircraft. (The latter are stowed flat on the deck when the vessel is in action.)

The *Boise* is one of nine light cruisers of the Brooklyn class, all of which were laid down in 1935-6. She carries fifteen 6-in. guns and eight 5-in. A.-A. weapons, and has a displacement of 10,000 tons: her complement is 868. The hangar included in the hull right aft is a completely new departure. It is provided with a lift and can accommodate eight aircraft in all. The presence of this hangar accounts for the very wide flat counter and high freeboard aft, which is also utilised to give the after guns higher command.

THE EPIC OF THE "BOISE"—PHASE I—"The 'Boise' took brutal punishment. She received eleven 'straddles.' . . . High flames enveloped her. . . ."—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

THE EPIC OF THE "BOISE"—PHASE II—"The 'Boise' appeared out of the darkness. . . . She set on fire and sank a heavy cruiser of the Nati class. Almost simultaneously she sank a Japanese destroyer." Altogether she sank two heavy Jap cruisers, one light cruiser and three destroyers (see notes on left)—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

THE DRAMATIC RESCUE OF SICK AND WOUNDED MEN FROM GUADALCANAR. The plane which was taking them from the Solomons had to make a forced landing at a lonely reef: the rescue plane only reached them after another ten days—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker (from photographic material)*

This U.S. Army transport-plane (a Curtis C-46 troop-carrier) was carrying two dozen sick and wounded Marines from Guadalcanar Island to a base hospital in the south-west Pacific, when it had to make a forced landing on a lonely reef in the South Pacific. Here the crew and passengers were marooned for ten days until they succeeded in repairing their radio, and were thus able to give the rescuers their position. Navy seaplanes soon arrived on the scene and removed the men from the wrecked aircraft; they were later taken to their proper destination by destroyer

THE WESTWARD FLIGHT OF ROMMEL'S AFRIKA KORPS AFTER ITS DEFEAT BY THE EIGHTH ARMY: The strange scene during the retreat through the Desert as viewed by a lone British patrol—an unending line of cars, their headlights ablaze in the night, fleeing away from the scene of battle—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The Eighth Army's Triumphant Campaign

ROMMEL'S FLIGHT to the WEST

And the British Pursuit into Libya

Two Special Sphere Drawings of Night Scenes in the Desert

Nose to tail, during the retreat of Rommel's stricken Afrika Korps, hundreds of Italian lorries crammed with weary German troops ground their way westwards and southwards along the coastal and inland roads. And throughout the breadth of Cyrenaica the Eighth Army followed in hot pursuit. The tattered remnants of the Panzer army looked in vain for protection by the *Luftwaffe*: instead, they found the R.A.F., relentless in pursuit in the air, and small, business-like columns of carriers, guns and British infantry in trucks on the ground.

By night the Axis columns rushed forward through the desert, with headlights blazing like searchlights in their wild haste—the uppermost fear in the minds of the drivers that they might be cut off. While the enemy dashed westwards, the British desert columns struck out night and day over the open desert. Their task was to bar the way to isolated bodies of the enemy who kept breaking away from the main body to save their skins—to say nothing of "soft-skinned" transport. Wherever possible, blocks in the road were made and traffic jams created, so that the R.A.F. could bomb the congested spots. The strange scene is depicted by Mr. Davies above.

In the lower drawing Mr. Davies shows another, and different, night scene—that of our supply columns moving up at speed to reinforce the Eighth Army around Derna. Along the desert roads, drivers were warned to keep to the macadam highway: to stray would have meant disaster with heavily-laden vehicles. At certain points—such as the Tobruk-Derna junction—military policemen had to be stationed as guides to control the great volume of traffic.

HARD ON THE HEELS OF THE FLYING ENEMY CAME THE FIRST BRITISH CONVOYS: A scene at the Tobruk-Derna junction in Cyrenaica as vast British columns came hurtling westwards through the night, bringing up supplies and ammunition to the advancing Eighth Army—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The Eighth Army's Triumphant Campaign

The SCENE on the FIELD of BATTLE

The Incredible Litter of Modern War

Described by DONALD COWIE

IMAGINE a vast undulating plain of sand and rubble, whose sole claim to a rather awful beauty in normal times was just its sheer, clean emptiness—and people it to-day with the after-wreckage of the greatest African battle in history: overturned guns, and men, and smoking tanks and lorries to the horizon distance, barbed wire, petrol-tins, thousands of rounds of small-arms ammunition everywhere, like needles of a pine forest under-foot; more overturned and often moaning men, wandering men, photographs of sweethearts.

It is curious, perhaps significant, that accounts of modern battlefields after the fight make most—even more than of the gigantic steel litter—of the paper. The correspondents (though not necessarily the soldiers) can never seem to understand that—the fluttering, disreputable detritus of every kind of military form and document, of newspapers even, besides letters, letters, and more pathetic letters. It is as if, they say, the men in a last agony of despair decided to fling the basic support of their fragile civilisation to the winds: the paper.

That, at least, is one respect in which the modern battlefield differs from the famous ones of the past. Reclamation, such as is being performed so efficiently in Libya to-day by special units of the Middle Eastern forces, was rarely practised in the past. Hence hundreds of heavy trophies, like cannon, would be abandoned by the conquerors to rust and the eternal wonder, if not loathing, of the local peasantry. Years after, a curious traveller would note the relics still, half-submerged in mud and superstitiously avoided by the plough.

Near Fuka, the other day, our men came across two large vehicles: a British lorry taken by the Germans last June, and a German single-decker omnibus, lying on their sides together, bullet-holes in the radiator, cabins perforated nastily. A fighter had caught them, they had collided, and their drivers lay dead at the wheels. They had been used as a divisional headquarters, and papers and archives lay about amid a welter of ink-stained and blood-stained stationery.

After Waterloo, a French general wrote of the scene in a village: "I saw pillage going on in every direction: open caissons, stripped and half-broken, blocked up the streets. The pavement was covered with plundered and torn baggage."

Yes, the human aspect must have predominated in those pre-"blitz" battles; before the coming of high explosive and steel war-engines, it was man—and his friend the horse—who remained the principal weapon, and, apart from cannon, the wreckage was either flesh and blood, or transport articles and the ordinary belongings of men.

Recently Libya has been most conspicuously, as the photographs show, a litter of steel. All the 700-odd tanks of Rommel's Panzer divisions, and all the light Italian tanks, *save fifteen*; well over a thousand guns, thousands of lorries and cars, hundreds of aircraft in various conditions, from brand-new to bits and pieces, great heaps of small-arms and machine-guns, boxes of ammunition—a giant ordnance store turned inside-out and besprinkled unpleasantly with land-mines, barbed wire and booby-traps, was the sight that met the technical rearguard of the Eighth Army "the morning after the night before." Perhaps it was a unique scene, not only in extent. Possibly there had never been such a "perfect" deserted battlefield of this size

(Continued below on right)

THE LITTER OF A MODERN BATTLEFIELD IN
This was the scene at

"Beyond Bardia the road runs almost dead straight mile by mile," writes a war correspondent with the Eighth Army. "The wreckage of transport, planes and tanks along sections of the road was thick. German and Italian equipment was strewn all over the roadside. We came across a recently-abandoned Italian encampment. The tents gave evidence of

before; that is to say, a battlefield in open country without any but lethal marks of man in sight.

But, above all, still looms the fantastic leavings of the last German armies in the 1914-1918 war. We should remember, though we sometimes forget, that our men, between August and November 1918, took 385,500 German prisoners and 6,615 guns: the roads through Lille, Roubaix and Douai to the frontier were soon mountainous with neat, towering piles of small-arms, machine-guns, the bodies and wings of surrendered aircraft.

But the Libyan aftermath, for all comparisons, will probably remain without an equal in its

On left—**HUMAN "DEBRIS" IN THE DESERT: The New Zealanders rounding up their prisoners.** To-day not a fighting man of Rommel's once-great army remains at large in Egypt: but in the first days of the Eighth Army's offensive, thousands were wandering about the desert without knowing where to go or what to do. This batch was brought in by a few New Zealand armoured cars

EGYPT: Mile upon mile of wreckage strews the plain—tanks, tents, guns, overturned lorries, destroyed aircraft and personal impedimenta are seen on every hand. dusk in a battle area beyond Bardia after an Italian encampment had been hurriedly abandoned by the Axis—*Drawing by E. Byatt*

a hurried departure. Furniture, clothing, books, letters and postcards, jumbled in confusion on the floors, had been set alight. They were smouldering as we examined them, and as hand-grenades and small-arms ammunition were littered about we left as precipitately as the former occupants had done."

particular class: that of a battle fought to a finish and won decisively in an uninhabited desert.

Incidentally, the similar fights of the past were all on a smaller scale. About 40,000 Frenchmen killed, captured or dispersed was Marlborough's feat at Blenheim. Borodino lost the Russians 42,000 men. The French loss at Waterloo has never been accurately computed; our own was 15,000, similar to that of the Eighth Army. During that battle of August 8, 1918, described by Ludendorff as "the black day in German history," we took only 21,850 prisoners and 400 guns.

On right—**THE AXIS FORCES LEFT BEHIND MUCH OF THEIR SORELY-NEEDED EQUIPMENT AND STORES.** This staggering pile of wrecked planes is only a part of a pile of 100 aircraft which included troop-carrying gliders and huge Junkers 52s used to take stores and troops across the desert. Some were under repair, some in the process of being stripped for spare parts, and others had been destroyed by bombing

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE: THE BRITISH DESTROYER "VALOROUS" (one of the famous V and W class), WHICH HAS JUST CELEBRATED HER TWENTY-FIFTH A
war on convoy duties along the East Coast and in the North Sea. She is a vessel of 900 tons, armed wi

LIFE ON BOARD AN ESCORT SHIP ON ONE OF THE CONVOY LANES: Incidents, both grim and gay, fill the lives of officers and men on these vessels. Enemy mines, submarines, aircraft and E-boats present continual danger, and constant watch, with instant readiness for action, must be maintained day and night until the destination is reached and the convoy has been brought safely into port. This picture shows a 4-in. gun crew on an escort ship in the anti-flash kit which is always worn when enemy aircraft have been sighted: it consists of gauntlet gloves and hoods which almost cover the head and face

On right—Half a 6,000-ton ship, which was split in two by a torpedo, has recently been towed more than 1,000 miles through Atlantic storms to Britain. This feat of seamanship not only saved part of the ship's valuable cargo of aviation petrol, but has enabled her to go back into war service. For a completely new stern has now been fitted on to the original half in a British shipyard!

The ship, an oil tanker, was attacked by U-boats, and a torpedo blew off the stern. But the fore portion was still afloat, and two ocean tugs of the Royal Navy took the deserted half-ship in tow. Then began one of the finest salvage feats of the war. For ten days the tugs battled with the weather to save the hulk. At last they reached a northern port.

The half-ship was berthed at an isolated spot in preparation for unloading. Her only pump was out of action. A steam pump was rigged ashore, and piping laid to the ship's tanks. Then a second tanker was brought alongside. Her fires were drawn to reduce the danger of explosion, and pumping, controlled from the temporary steam pumps ashore, began. The cargo was safely transferred to the second tanker.

Chemists wearing gas-masks boarded the hulk and cleared her of petrol fumes. Then she was moved into dry dock. Naval architects inspected the half-hull, with its pieces of tangled iron, shattered bulkheads, battered plates and broken pipes.

They held a conference and announced that they could build a completely new stern and soon set her afloat again on war service.

They have now fulfilled their promise!

ANNIVERSARY AT SEA. Built in 1917 at Dumbarton, H.M.S. "Valorous" has already steamed 120,000 miles in this ith 4-in. guns (See notes at right)—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

THE ROYAL NAVY AT WORK

On left—Although she is a veteran of the last war, H.M.S. *Valorous* (one of the famous V and W class destroyers) has already steamed 120,000 miles in this war, shepherding convoys up and down the East Coast and in the North Sea. She has shot down several Nazi planes, and in nearly three years of convoy escort work she has had many brushes with E-boats.

Lieut.-Com. W. Fitzroy, R.N., who commands the *Valorous*, served in her as a midshipman in 1923. "I used to be very seasick in those days," he said, "but nothing seems to affect me now. The ship has been changed a good deal since then, but she is as good as ever she was."

In point of fact, *Valorous* has just celebrated her twenty-fifth birthday at sea. She was built in 1917 by Messrs. W. Denny and Bros., of Dumbarton: originally, like all vessels of her class, she was of 1916 design, but during 1938-1939 she was rearmed for escort duties. Since the outbreak of war she has been continuously employed on these tasks. Among captains of merchantmen, the 25-year-old destroyer has earned an enviable reputation. Captains often ask to be put in convoys escorted by that "Chinese destroyer," for up and down the East Coast *Valorous* is known as "Lucky Lu," and a keen shot against aircraft.

Valorous is one of the convoy escort ships which believe in music to help a convoy along. When rounding up a convoy at the beginning of a voyage, her Commanding Officer generally orders a record of "Heading for the Last Round-Up" to be played over the loud-hailer. "You 'd be surprised at what a wonderful effect it seems to have on the stragglers," he said. "Then, when we get near port, I play 'Home, Sweet Home, Again.' We often get requests flashed from ships to play a particular tune. One of the most popular is a 'Pop-eye the Sailorman' record."

When *Valorous* reached her home port at the conclusion of twenty-five years of hard service with the Royal Navy, the ship's company celebrated her birthday by giving a dance at a local hall. Officers gave a dinner-party on board and went on to the dance afterwards. Several members of the crew have served in the destroyer since the beginning of the war.

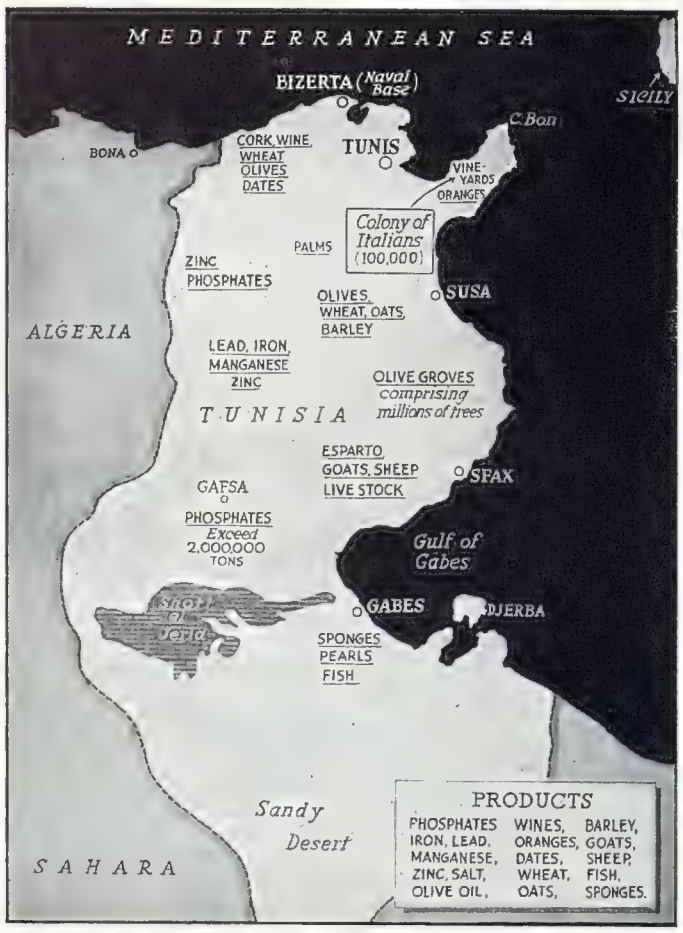
SALVING HALF A TANKER: WITH HER STERN BLOWN AWAY, the fore portion (still with its load of precious oil) was towed by two ocean tugs to an isolated spot. Here her cargo was salved and she was then moved into dry dock, where a new stern was fitted. (See notes at left)—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

TUNISIA—THE NEW BATTLE AREA IN NORTH AFRICA

A Brief Survey of the Country and Its People—to Act as a "Background" for Communiqués from the British First Army

By ARTHUR BARRETT

THE NORTH AFRICAN WAR AREA and its strategic railways and seaways : If Bizerta is held by the Germans, now that they have full control of the whole of France, the twin routes to Marseilles and Toulon would doubtless be heavily used. The main Italian railway lines follow the coasts—in some cases in dangerous proximity to the seashore : German supplies and reinforcements to North Africa coming via Italy would have to pass through heavily-bombed Milan and Genoa. Other communications from Bizerta and Tripoli are with Sicily, but these routes are, of course, subject to bombing by the R.A.F. operating from Malta, North Africa and other points



THE WEALTH OF TUNISIA, showing the areas from which many valuable products are derived. Millions of olive-trees are a striking feature of the landscape : around Cape Bon there is an immense colony of Italians, who here number 100,000

IN the houses of the North African Moors are said to hang keys—taken from Spanish palaces to which they still hope to return. In Italy, they preserved no keys but the desire to reoccupy Tunisia (the old Roman Carthaginian province) was always highly vocal. Land of corn and copper, coal and iron, wine, oil and wheat, wool and dates, melting-pot of more races than have ever poured into any other country, not even excluding America, Tunisia has paid France well for the occupation of 1881, when a treaty of sorts was made with the then Bey, Mohammed-es-Sadok. The economic decline of piracy (Bizerta was one of the principal bases of the Mediterranean Corsairs), rather than military pressure, led the ruling house to seek financial support from some European power. France and Italy were the only interested powers, and the French Consul offered the better terms. Though the French have, in fact, supervised the economic development of the country (and extremely well, on the whole), they have never migrated there in large numbers. The Italians, on the other hand, have swarmed into the country and now form the largest section of the European population.

The French jibe of pre-war days—"The Italian armies have already invaded Tunis—with bare feet!"—was directed at the thousands of Sicilians, Lombardians and Savoyards who have settled on the fertile soil, particularly in the vineyards of Cape Bon. With their own clubs, newspapers, doctors and theatres they have formed a close national bloc, about 100,000 strong. But for the fact that many of them were of Jewish origin, and so tepid to some of the more Teutonic aspects of Fascism, they would undoubtedly have been a much more embarrassing element.

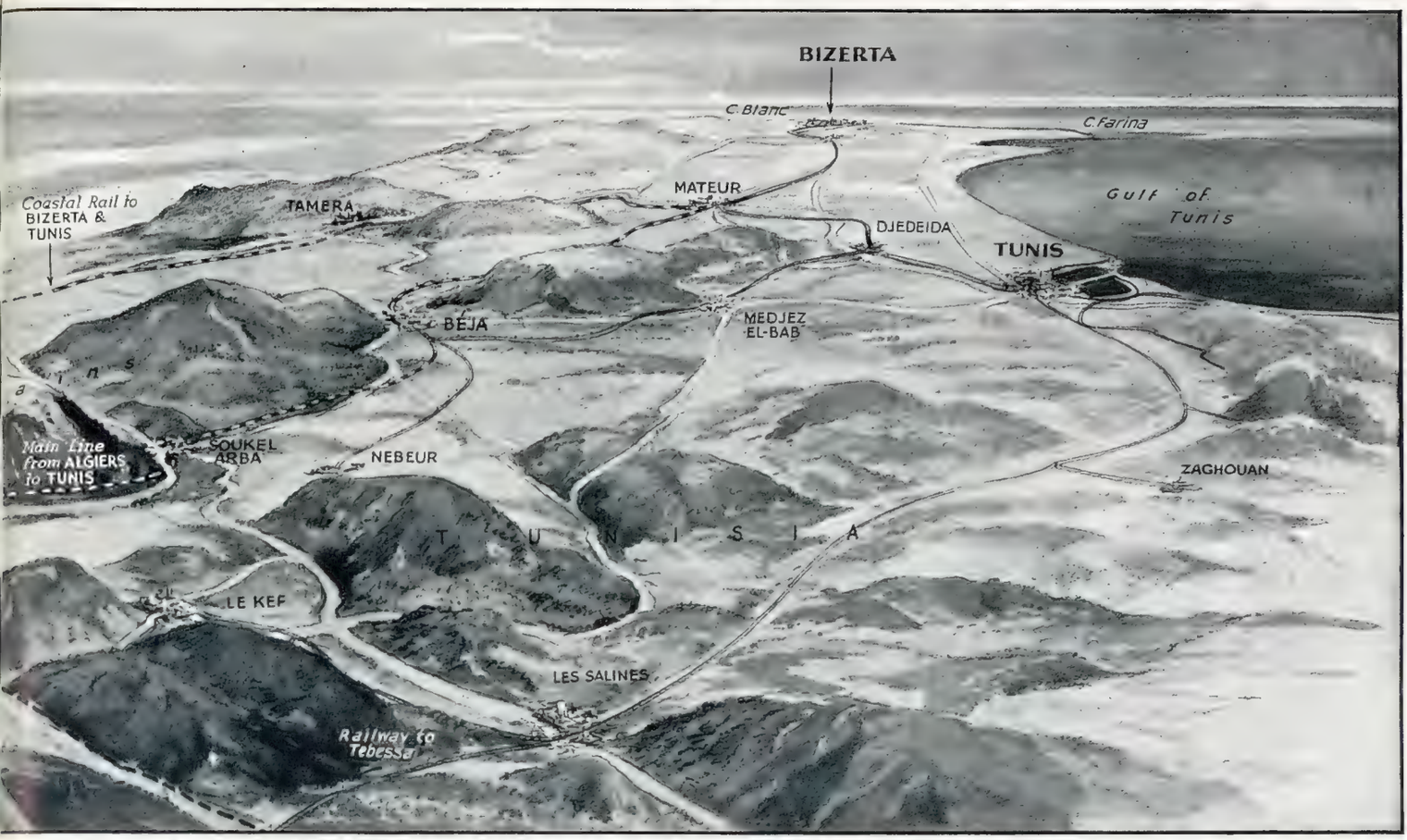
About the same size as England without Wales, Tunisia has no tangible southward boundary, merely frittering out into the Sahara, and geographically it resembles its western neighbour, Algeria, rather than Libya, which forms the eastern border. The coastline in the neighbourhood of Bizerta is rugged and rocky in the extreme. The recent German description of it as the "finest naval base in the world" is little of an exaggeration. A good navigable channel cuts through the coastal plateau, giving access to the two salt-water lakes, the outer harbour alone having an area of 230 acres, while the four naval docks at Ferryville are capable of accommodating anything below a battleship. With two airfields and a seaplane base, as well as modern fabrications, Bizerta is well-defended, except that, as in Singapore, all her defences have been designed to meet attack from the sea.

It is the western half of the country, from the Algerian border to Sfax, that is richest economically and best developed. From Sfax onwards, the country degenerates into the semi-desert characteristic of Tripoli. Agricultural in the main, with good roads and railways, the western half has been extensively irrigated, the water channels being responsible for minor plagues of mosquitoes in the summer, until the authorities were literally stung into action.

The land fringing the Sicilian narrows, between Sfax and Sousse, is blanketed with olive-trees, single plantations sometimes having as many as 7,000,000 trees. Further inland lie the wheat-lands, which sent nearly 20,000 metric tons to France every year, latterly pre-empted by the Nazis. The phosphate deposits of Gafea are the source of the agricultural prosperity of the colony, and are so abundant as to leave even then a yearly surplus for export of about 2,000,000 tons. Iron and lead made the Djebel Derissa region a second Lorraine, while from the rest of the country come dates, esparto, salt, barley, sponges, pearls and textiles. Though subject to the usual extreme day-to-night temperature of the Mediterranean southern littoral, the climate is never extremely hot by day, though cool enough to make fires welcome in the houses at night.

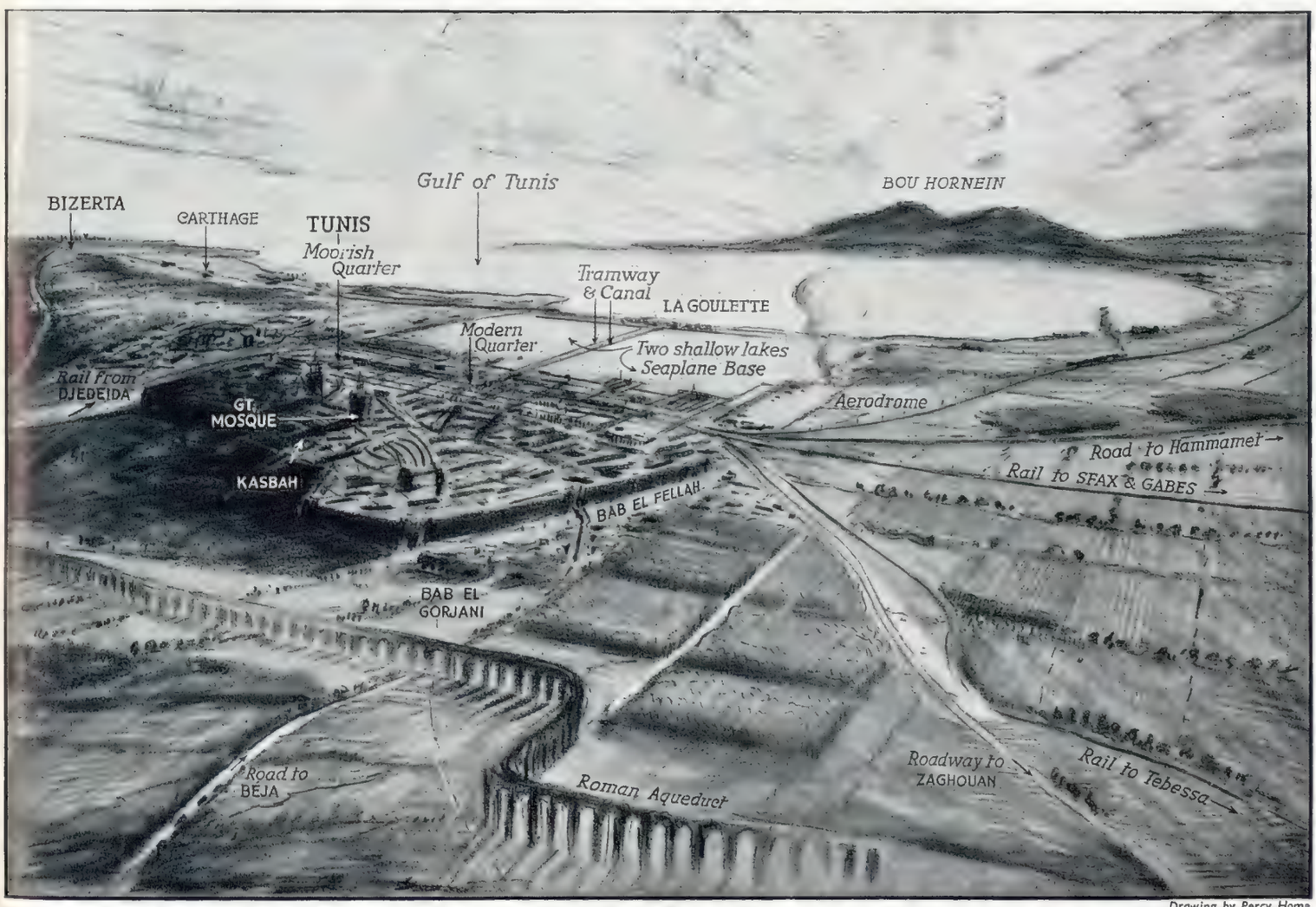
Communications in the eastern area, approaching the Tripolitanian border, have been deliberately kept at the minimum military level. The railway approaches no nearer than Gabes, 100 miles from the border. The Mareth line, Tunisia's Maginot, runs inland about 150 miles until it meets the mountains. It was built in greater depth than its prototype, for tank traps liberally bestrewed the countryside as far back as Gabes. How far these have been dismantled or reversed it is hard to say. One would not expect the French to have hurried over the task, and events in the desert may have made the Italians too pot-valiant to insist on it until latterly. Even so, since the defences have been nearly twenty years in the making, they would take some dismantling in an area which had long been viewed by the French as the seat of the next war. M. Armond Guillon, the French Resident-General in Tunisia, pointed out the loads of arriving material to me one evening in 1936 as we stood on the quays at Ferryville with Lloyds' agent, M. Fleury. "We may not need it for five years," he said, "but we shall certainly need it in ten." With such a deep-rooted conviction in the hearts of most officials, it is difficult to believe that demilitarisation will have been hurried.

STREET SCENE IN THE CAPITAL OF TUNISIA : A busy thoroughfare—the Avenue de France—one of the principal shopping centres of the very cosmopolitan city of Tunis



THE LINES OF APPROACH TO BIZERTA AND TUNIS, AND THE TOPOGRAPHICAL NATURE OF THE NEW BATTLE AREA: The Algeria-Tunis border is shown on the left, and the main line and road to Tunis, at the eastern end of the Atlas range, are shown on the right—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

One passes from Algeria into north-west Tunisia across a frontier line which extends southwards from the little town and port of La Calle, once famous for its coral fisheries. It is connected with Bona by steam tramway. It has no real connection with the port of Tabarca, which lies a few miles to the east. The coastal route is therefore impeded by a break in rail connection, which is not the case with the main through route, Algiers to Tunis, which is here seen approaching the frontier at Ghardimaou. This main line of approach to the Tunis-Bizerta area is flanked on the north by the Medjerd Mountains; it passes through a district full of the remains of the ancient Roman occupation of North Africa. Le Kef, an interesting town, is built of Roman ruins; it occupies an elevated position at the western extremity of the Jebel Dir; the chief sights are the Temple of Hercules, a palace and the remains of the baths. A number of Roman cisterns outside the town bear testimony to the skill of the Roman engineers. The eastern route continues through Beja, an Arab town of 10,000 inhabitants, once a prominent grain centre in Roman days. It still possesses a number of ancient gateways. Still further east is Mateur, an important rail junction with connections with Bizerta and Tunis; the branch to the latter takes one through Djedeida. The high ground of the eastern Atlas gradually falls away as one approaches the Eastern Tunisian plains.



Drawing by Percy Horne

TUNIS CITY AS SEEN FROM THE SOUTH-WEST, showing its shallow twin lakes (one of which is used as a seaplane base), its aerodrome, and its wonderful Roman aqueduct (which still supplies the city with water). About three miles away is the site of ancient Carthage, and far to the north-west is the modern naval base of Bizerta, with which it is connected by rail. Tunis was occupied by the French in 1881, although it is still nominally under the rule of the Bey

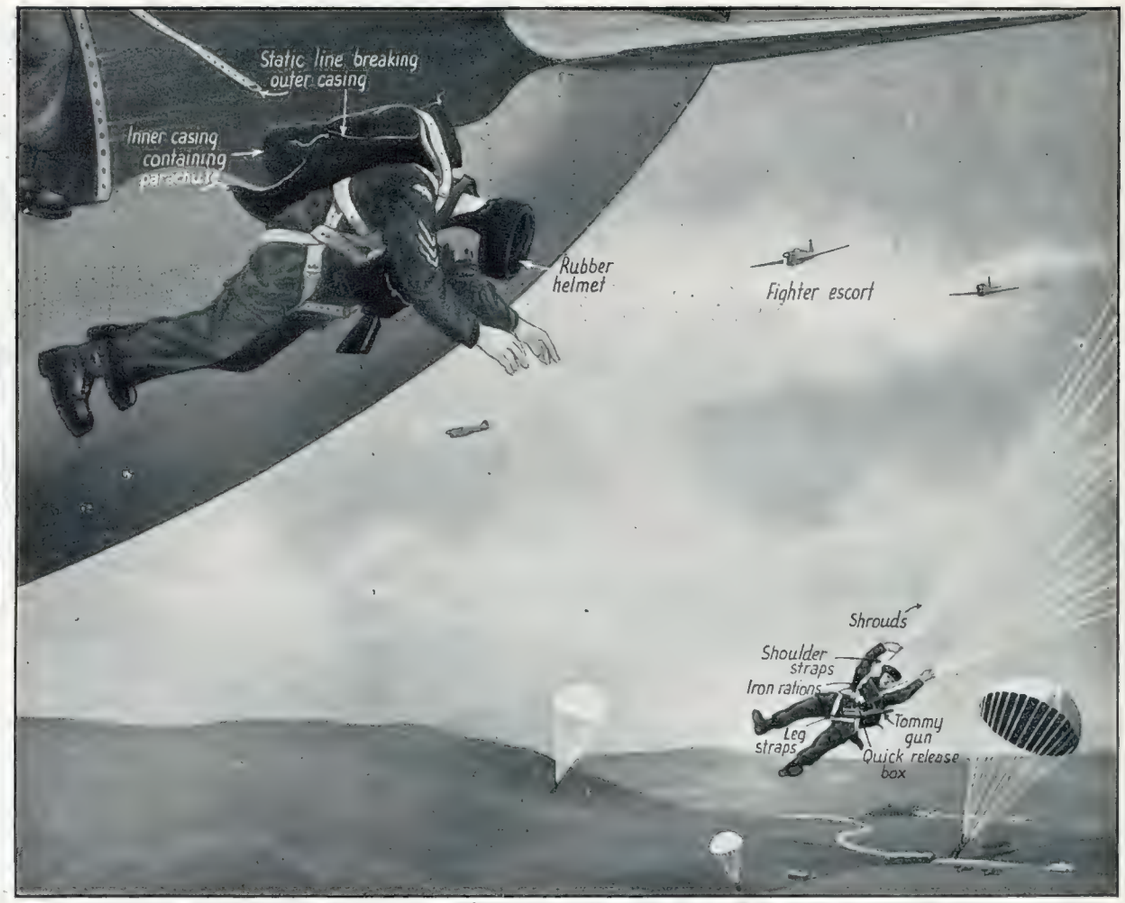
PARACHUTISTS OVER NORTH AFRICA

The Method By Which They Were Dropped From Large U.S. Transport Planes

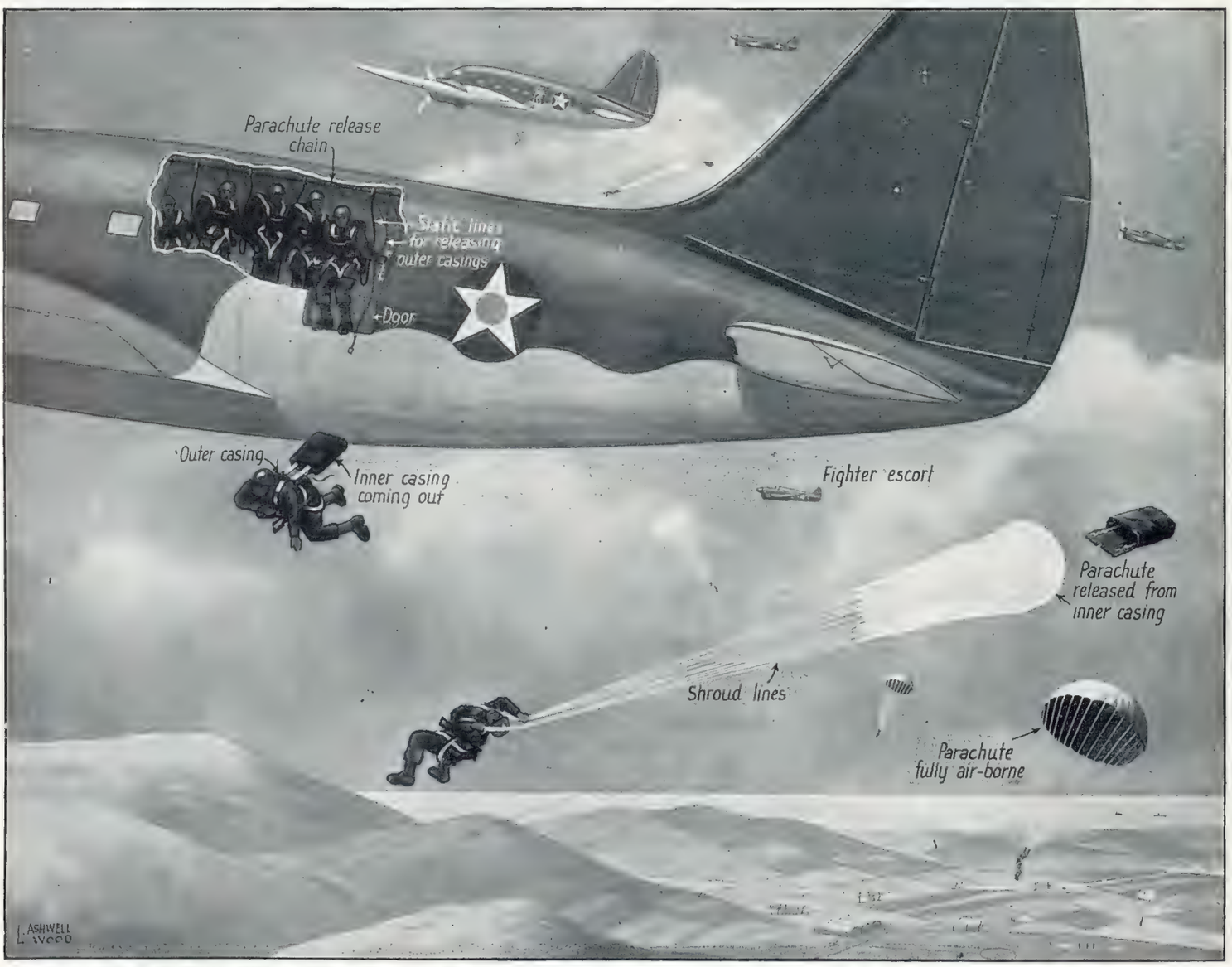
—Two Drawings by L. Ashwell Wood

Both American and British parachutists have now participated in the present operations in North Africa. The first landing of the former was near Oran: their second was with the object of occupying an isolated landing-ground in Algeria and denying it to the enemy. (A few weeks ago troops were dropped—for the first time in any theatre of war—in New Guinea.) British parachutists were also dropped over Tunisia in connection with the forward movement of the First Army.

In general, the U.S. troops use the Douglas C-47 for the transportation of their parachutists. This can carry a load of fully-equipped men, and drop them with precision just where they are needed. The Americans are garbed in paratroop blouses, baggy trousers, "jump" boots and steel helmets: by contrast, our own men mainly preferred to wear ordinary marching boots—and they wear rubber helmets, usually, in place of the U.S. parachutists' steel helmet. Incidentally, the British sky troops used in North Africa were all drawn from the original Parachute Battalion, and include men from sixty-seven different battalions: the majority of them are Londoners.



BRITISH PARACHUTISTS JUMPING FROM A U.S. TRANSPORT PLANE DURING THE NORTH AFRICAN LANDINGS. Unlike the American parachutists, steel helmets are not usually worn by our own men, nor do many of them wear special boots



U.S. PARACHUTISTS DROPPING OVER A NORTH AFRICAN AIRFIELD. Aircraft are being made in large numbers in the United States for this purpose. A parachute release-chain runs down the centre of the cabin: attached to it are the "static lines." As the men jump, the line breaks the outer casing, which then opens up the inner casing containing the actual parachute

THE BUSINESS END OF A BOMBER

How Bomb-aiming and Turrets Influence the External Appearance of British Aircraft

By PATRICK HAMILTON

THE three-motor plane (one engine in each wing and one perched precariously on the nose) is now quite extinct. It has persisted in the Italian Air Force longer than in any other (e.g., the Savoia Marchetti 79)—much to the detriment of that force—but every first-class air Power has preferred to use the valuable space in the nose of the machine for other purposes.

An engine projecting so far ahead really does very little useful work, and the net gain definitely does not counter-balance the loss of the best positions in the machine for the bomb-aimer and forward gunner.

While this general principle is accepted by designers of all the Powers alike, there are still a good many differences in style not only between the noses of Axis machines and ours, but between British types themselves.

To deal with the broader difference between our machines and the Germans' first, the Nazi machines show a distinct preference for transparent noses made up of a number of small panes, assembled in a highly-angular form. The nose of the Dornier 215, for example, has a most old-fashioned "leaded-light" appearance, and the view for the crew must be anything but satisfactory and certainly not to be compared with that from the Wellington or Lancaster.

The transparent material is a synthetic resin, "methyl methacrylate," or "Perspex," as it is known in this country. It is not an easy material to work; it is soft and scratches easily and may split if drilled or cut carelessly. If large pieces have to be moulded to accurate curves to give good vision, elaborate presses have to be made, and, of course, the larger the individual pieces the greater the wastage if anything goes wrong. The Teutonic mind, weighing up the pros and cons, evidently decided in favour of the simpler, small-paned nose. Never having accepted the idea of precision bombing, the handicap to the bomb-aimer was evidently considered a minor thing beside the simpler constructional method.

Though the bulk of the nose-window is made of "Perspex," most British bombers incorporate a disc of optically-flat glass in the bomb-aimer's line of sight, to give him the best possible view of his target. In most of the newer machines, this is worked unobtrusively into the nose, but in the older bombers, notably the Whitley, it takes the form of a very conspicuous angular box, jutting out from the bottom of the nose. In many of the older Nazis, this feature is missing altogether—further practical evidence of the German outlook on bombing.

But undoubtedly the main influence "that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will," as far as the big machines are concerned, is the power-driven gun turret. It is one of the major scientific mysteries of the war that British designers should so long have had the field of turret design to themselves. As soon as aeroplanes became capable of speeds of over 150 m.p.h., it became quite clear that the air-pressure effect on an unprotected gunner and his guns made rapid sighting and accurate firing almost impossible. Outside Britain, designers dodged the issue by putting the gunner inside the fuselage to shield him from the air, and shelved the main problem of overcoming the air-stream on the guns. British firms

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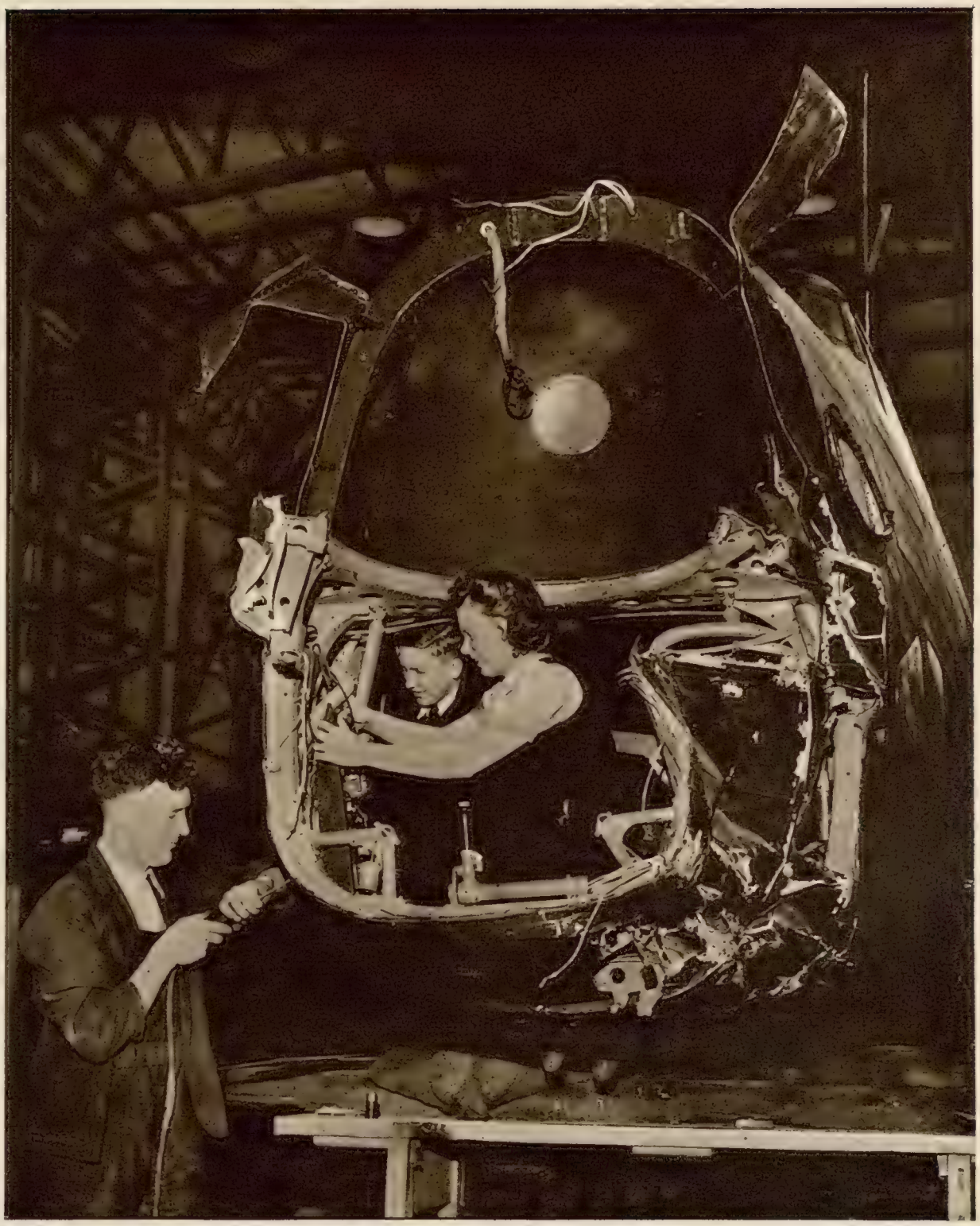
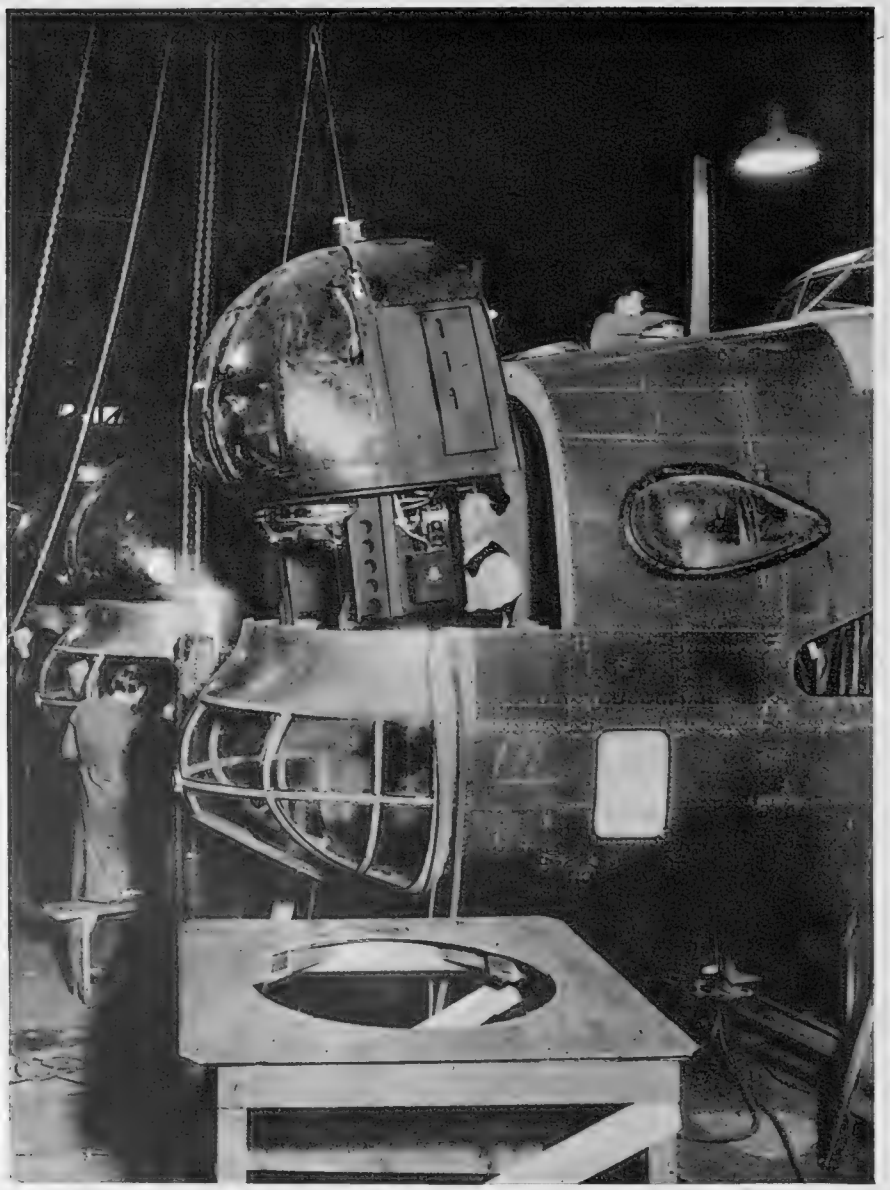


AFTER A RAID OVER ENEMY TERRITORY: Repair work being carried out on the damaged nose of a Halifax at a factory in the North which specialises in tasks of this nature

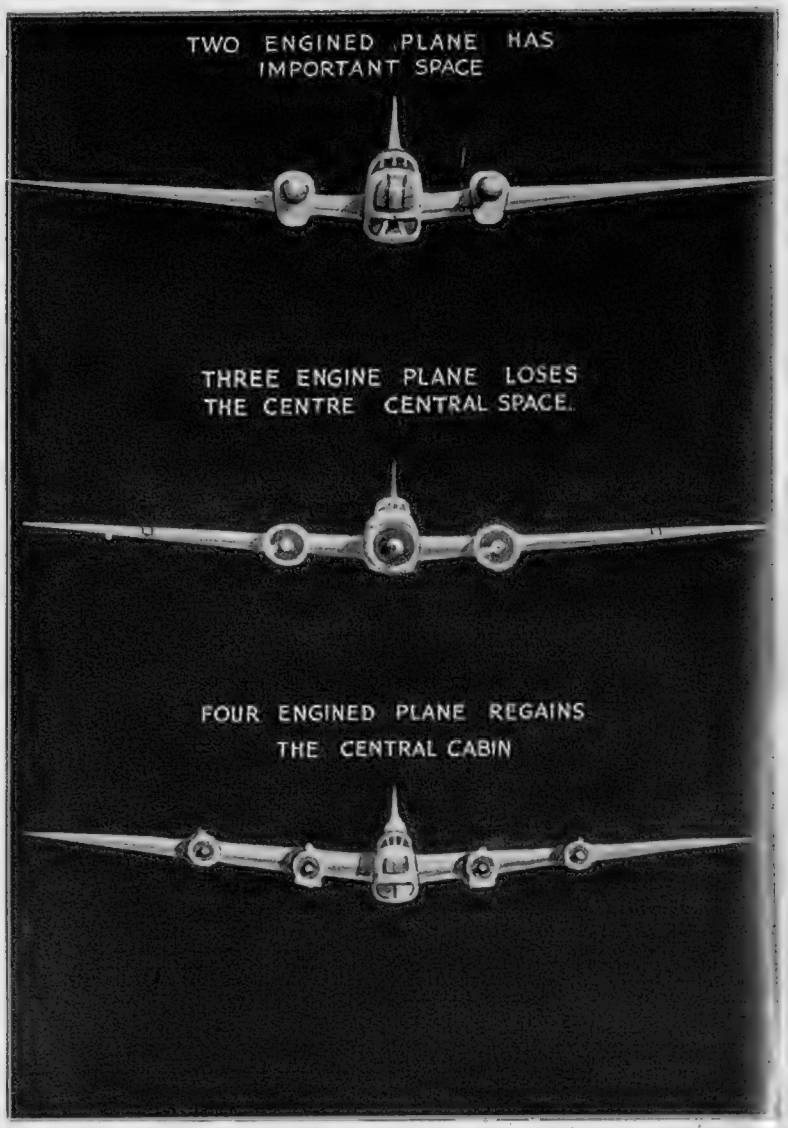
Many tales have been told of the way in which our big four-engined bombers have stood up to punishment, and how, in spite of severe damage, they have made a successful return to their home bases after having taken part in heavy raids on the enemy. This picture was taken at a Northern depot where giant Halifax bombers are overhauled in sections, repaired and put back into service as good as new. Components too badly damaged for repair are reduced to salvage, all sound parts being first removed and sent to store for use in rebuilding other Halifaxes. Thus nothing is wasted

ASSEMBLING THE FAMOUS BOULTON-PAUL GUN TURRETS which are fitted, amongst others, to Halifax bombers. These turrets have been conspicuously successful in air warfare, in offensive as well as defensive operations. They now form part of the armament of certain American types, in addition to British

THE BUSINESS END OF A BOMBER *(continued)*



THE "TWO-PIECE" FRONT END OF THE HALIFAX: Lowering the front-gunner's turret into the nose of the bomber: the turret is power-operated



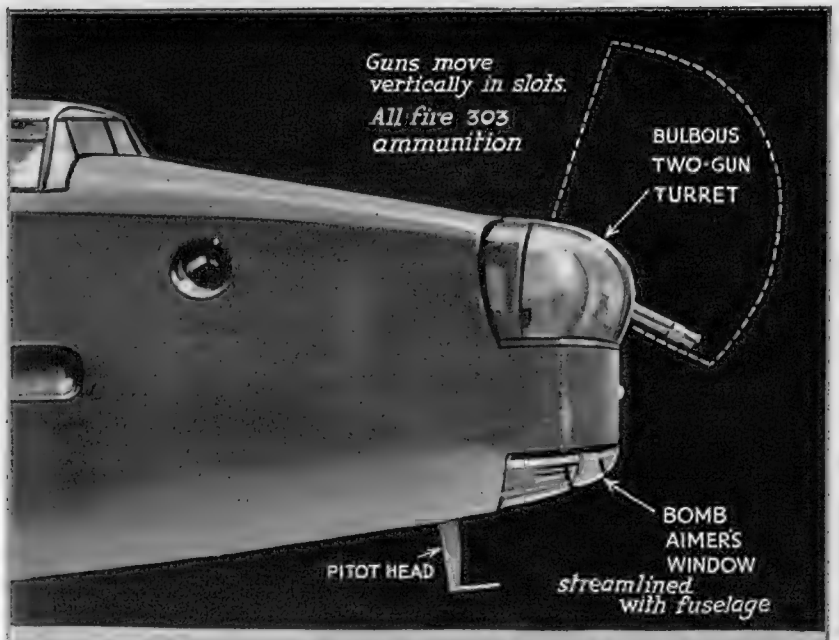
HOW THE PARAMOUNT NEEDS OF THE BOMB-AIMER HAVE INFLUENCED AIRCRAFT DESIGN: Apart from Italy, none of the great air Powers of to-day designs three-engined aircraft. The two-engined and four-engined types alone give the unimpeded vision which is the main consideration of the designer of to-day. In these types, the bomb-aimer has a clear downward, and forward, view: in the three-engined type his view is obscured by the central propeller in front of the cabin

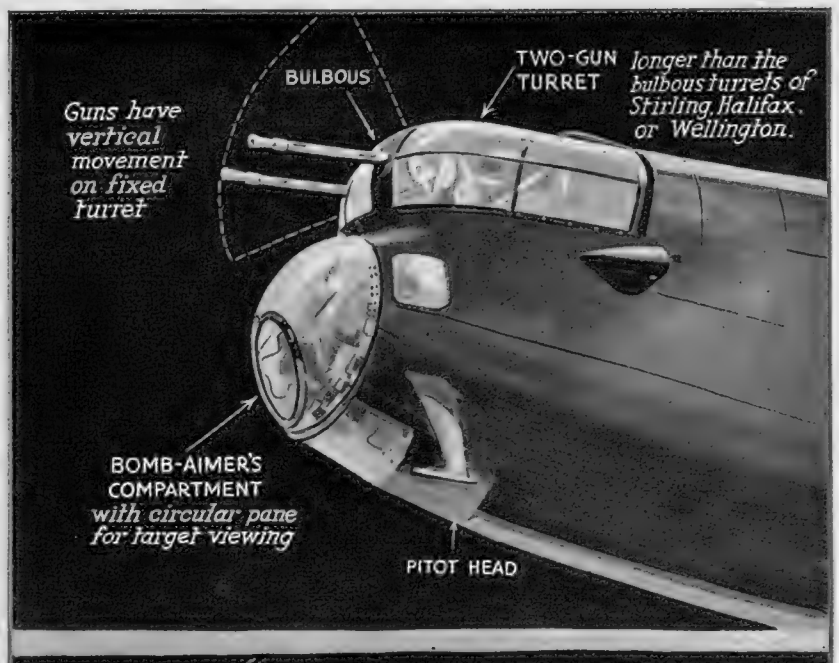
AT WORK ON THE "PERSPEX" NOSE OF THE BOMBER, through which the bomb-aimer will operate. The nose is held with screws which cut their own thread in the "Perspex" material: the bomb-aimer's observation panel (of optical glass) is at the bottom

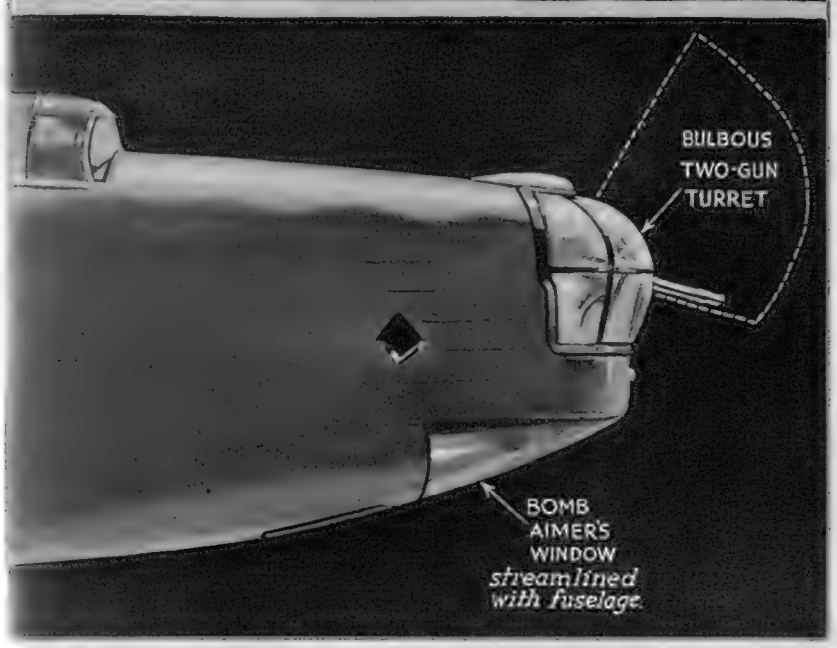
A SCENE AT A CALIFORNIAN AIRCRAFT FACTORY: The "plexiglass" windows of fighting planes in the plant of the great Douglas works. Women workers are imparting a final polish to them before other workers incorporate them into the finished product

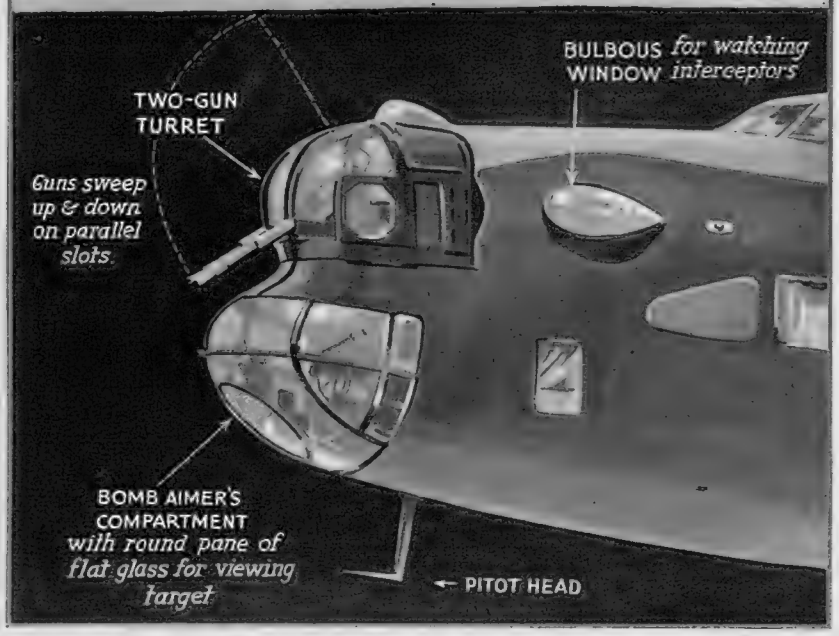
(Continued from preceding page)

persisted in attacking the problem, which presented many difficulties (in extreme conditions the loading on the turret may amount to nearly a ton); and at the outbreak of war we had three tested turret systems—Frazer Nash, Boulton and Paul and Bristol—differing in type and principle, but all thoroughly sound and workable. It is doubtful if, in 1939, the aircraft designers of the rest of the world had one turret design thoroughly tested between them, and our superiority in offensive power per machine in those early days was invaluable when we were so inferior in numbers. The turret employs either an electric or, more usually, a hydraulic motor to move the guns for the gunner. Even at 200 m.p.h. the air loading on a single gun may sometimes outstrip the strength of the strongest man. While reinforcing muscle by motor was the obvious solution, the snag was to devise a finger-tip control system with the necessary delicacy, and it was this difficulty which made Continental designers dodge the issue. British designers have solved it so satisfactorily that the turret gunner can write his name with a pencil stuck in the muzzle of one of the guns.









THE FRONT ENDS OF FOUR IMPORTANT HEAVY BRITISH BOMBERS: (*top left*) The Short Stirling; (*bottom left*) the Wellington; (*top right*) the Lancaster; (*bottom right*) the Halifax. In each case, the bomb-aimer's position is shown together with the arc of fire from the front turret—*Drawings by Roland Davies*

The power-operated gun turret and the need for a clear view for the all-important bomb-aimer have had a great effect on the design of modern bombers. The first power-operated gun turret was fitted in the nose of the Overstrand medium bomber produced by the firm of Boulton and Paul: since then, the same firm has been prominent in the design of similar turrets, adapted and brought into line with modern requirements. Not only bombers, but fighters as well, have been fitted with gun turrets; outstanding examples are the Blackburn Roc and the Defiant—both two-seat fighters, with four-gun turrets of Boulton and Paul design. Modern gun turrets are very intricate machines: they are power-operated, so that they turn smoothly as the gunner sights his target in the reflector sight. Servo-fed motors supply the ammunition from magazines farther in the aircraft. They are fitted with two or four guns, and parts of the turrets are armour-plated to protect the gunner. The tail turrets of our newest bombers have a fire-power of 110 lb. per minute

His controls resemble a cross between a pilot's joystick and a cycle handlebar. The initial control is electric, in that buttons on the control bar open electrically-controlled valves. Through these valves oil is pumped under pressure to hydraulic rams and motors which raise, lower and traverse the combined weight of gunner and guns against the possible 300 m.p.h. slip-stream of the aircraft.

The control system is so sensitive that the gunner is hardly conscious of the control system at all, merely keeping his sights bearing on the target as easily as a man with a shotgun follows a bird in flight. Armour-plate for his protection, and electric heaters capable of dealing with temperatures below zero, add to the gunner's efficiency.

The larger bombers have three turrets—nose, dorsal and tail. From their point of view, the tail turret is most important, since the tail attack is the favourite method of the intercepting fighter. For this reason, the tail turret now usually mounts four ·303 Browning guns, and draws its ammunition via long chutes from a magazine in the centre of the bomber. With a capacity of several thousand rounds, his magazine enables the rear-gunner to be prodigal in his fire against an attacking fighter, which has no more than a few seconds' ammunition and so must hold its fire until the last possible moment.

Most ingenious nose turret is that fitted to the Short Sunderland, which slides to and fro on a track, in order that the forward cockpit may also be used for anchoring purposes.

British turrets, some having a fire power of over 610 lb. a minute, are commonly fitted to many American bombers, including the well-known Lockheed Hudson.

AN ADDITIONAL HAZARD FOR THE BOMBER CREW!—A Lancaster over France runs into a covey of partridges
—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

During the recent raid on the Creusot works in France, one of the Lancaster bombers ran into a covey of partridges. The windscreen was broken, and fragments blinded the flight engineer, who was sitting alongside the pilot. The flight engineer was given morphia to ease his pain, and for most of the flight was semi-conscious. When the Lancaster landed a partridge was found to be embedded in the cowling of the port inner engine, and another was caught up on the leading edge of the port wing. Usually, birds are quick to escape from an oncoming aircraft; but in this case they must have been taken by surprise by the low-flying aeroplane!

FIGHTING THE JAPS IN NEW GUINEA

How the Australians and Americans Forced the Enemy Right Back to the Sea at Buna

A DRAMATIC change has taken place in the battle area of New Guinea during the past two months, culminating in the pinning-down of the Japanese to the small district lying between Buna and Gona on the coast, where they are trapped, with Allied forces surrounding them on one side and the sea on the other.

The scene was totally different two months ago; then it was Port Moresby that was threatened by the advancing Japanese, who had never ceased to push their way forward, overcoming the tremendous obstacle of the Owen Stanley Range which had hitherto been considered an insurmountable barrier. Clad in green clothing, unseen in the jungle-covered mountains, they had filtered past the Australians, who were pressed ever backwards.

But General MacArthur had, by this time, sent reinforcements, hurrying over men and munitions by air, as the importance of Port Moresby to the defence of Australia was fully realised. On September 28 the Japanese came up against a stiffer resistance, which gained power and gradually drove them back over the toilsome route. The Australians had learnt the outflanking methods of their foes, becoming such apt pupils that they caught their masters napping.

When Kokoda was recaptured on November 3 it was obvious that a crisis had been reached, for the enemy had been driven out of the mountain area down to the plain. It had been a time of strenuous effort for the Australian troops, hampered by scanty supplies, suffering from tropical rain and heat, having to fell trees as they went for the making of corduroy roads, but once at Kokoda, supplies became easier. Food and munitions were brought by air, thus avoiding the long, tortuous trail, and the troops were at last able to have their first hot meal.

When the Australians reached Wairopi they could see the Japanese hurrying down the banks of the Kumusi, trying to get rafts or anything that would get them across the flooded river away into a district difficult for pursuit. An inland trail runs near the river leading to Salamaua and Lae, where the Japanese have their main base in New Guinea.

A short delay occurred at Wairopi, where bridges were rapidly improvised, the wire-rope bridge across the gorge having been destroyed, first by our own bombers, and then by the enemy. But the eager troops crossed in punts, many even swimming across the flooded water, varying from 200 to 400 ft. in width. Once across the river, there is a good road usable for motor transport; the dense jungle is left behind and greater speed by the troops could be achieved. Transport difficulties, however, were still troublesome. Supplies could be delivered at Kokoda by air, but the conveyance to the front-line troops remained far from easy. In their hurried retreat the Japanese had left behind some light rubber-tyred hand-carts which were found most useful for this purpose.

While the Australians had been driving the enemy back on the main track, a force of American troops had been airborne from Australia to do a flanking movement on Buna. They had literally hacked their way through untracked jungle, wading through swamps, sometimes up to their armpits in mud, making log bridges or rafts to cross rivers, and suffering from every form of insect pest, which could inflict misery. Giant ants were ceaseless foes, eating everything they could find, while mosquitoes attacked in their millions, but the daily dose of quinine carried the U.S. troops through to their planned position, converging on Buna from the south.

On November 16 General MacArthur came to Papua to conduct the campaign on the field, now that the operations were approaching the culmination. All this time the Allies had had complete air superiority, the Japanese having put up no air support for their troops. They did make an effort on the 18th, sending over bombers and fighters from Lae to attack the

GENERAL MACARTHUR INSPECTS THE NEW GUINEA BASES: Riding in the front seat of a Jeep car, the U.S. Commander-in-Chief inspects positions as Australian soldiers file past the car. To the extreme left (his face concealed by his wide-brimmed hat) is General Sir Thomas Blamey (Commander of the Australian Land Forces), who accompanied the American leader on his tour of inspection of the fighting area

A U.S. OFFICER INSPECTS THE INTERIOR OF A CAPTURED JAPANESE TANK: This had been knocked out in the jungle after the Japs had been pushed back to their beach-head after advancing almost to Port Moresby. These vehicles, lightly armed and very vulnerable, were evidently built from scrap-iron collected before the war from the United States

HEAVY TRAFFIC ON A JUNGLE TRAIL IN NEW GUINEA. There is only room for one file of "peep" cars, with no space for passing. This is a typical jungle trail, such as the Allied forces have been traversing

***On left*—U.S. TROOP-CARRIERS CIRCLING OVER BUNA, looking for a landing-place**

Drawing by Roland Davies

One of the most interesting features of the new Allied drive in New Guinea was the transportation of American forces by air. *It was the first time in the military history of the U.S. that infantry had been flown to the combat zone.* It has been revealed that the troops were transported by cargo-planes in one hop from Australia, more than 1,000 miles away. As each plane unloaded its human cargo, it turned and went back for more. The whole operation was carried out without loss. The Douglas Dakota aircraft depicted in this drawing is the most widely used of all big troop-carrying planes in the U.S. Army

THE JAPANESE FORCES IN NEW GUINEA ARE FORCED BACK TO THE SEA: They now hold out in a triangular section based on the shore between Buna and Gona. The Jap positions at the northern corner are being attacked by the Australians; those on the south by airborne U.S. infantry—*Drawing by Percy Home*

The attempt to capture Port Moresby by the back door, a process which proved successful elsewhere during the Japanese campaigns, was checkmated by the Australian troops as soon as the effect of reinforcements and supplies began to make themselves felt. The entry into Kokoda marked, literally, a turning point in this jungle campaign. With better roads ahead, and a jungle less dense, the Australians were able to turn the Japanese positions on the road to Buna. The gorge of the Kumusi River at Wairopi was captured, numbers of Japanese troops attempting her to break away to the north-west by way of the river and the jungle trail which connects the Buna road with Lae by way of Morade. The main body retreated without a seriously prolonged stand towards its sea base. The Australians were hot on their heels; and airborne U.S. troops, coming through jungle and swamp from the south, converged on the aerodrome, which lies some two miles outside Buna port. These troops joined up with the Australians, who were soon to attack, and finally occupy, Gona. The Japanese defence position developed into a triangle based on the sea between Gona and Buna, which are some fifteen miles apart, and extended inland to a distance of about eight miles. Some attempts at reinforcement were observed by Allied airmen; but such attempts were strafed without delay, with serious results for the Japanese, the health of whose troops has given way under the prolonged jungle fighting

now combined U.S. and Australian forces advancing on Buna. They were successful in sinking two trawlers on the coast, but the Allied air force at once replied by attacking the Lae aerodrome, destroying five bombers and six fighters on the ground, while Buna was constantly raided, destroying ammunition dumps, blowing anti-aircraft guns from their emplacements and bombing barges in the harbour.

Lieut.-General Horii is in command at Buna, and is expected to hold out strongly, for the Japanese seldom surrender easily. It is not known whether the naval force which appeared was intended to land reinforcements or to evacuate the troops. Eight destroyers were reported off Buna, which at once brought Allied fighters and bombers from Port Moresby, but a terrific thunderstorm on the Owen Stanley Range caused many to lose their way, and the destroyers could not be found owing to the dense cloud. The same day however, November 20, under cover of darkness, a cruiser with two destroyers appeared off Buna, and landing barges were seen going out.

Allied heavy bombers were soon on the spot, dropping flares, and then releasing their 500-lb. bombs. The cruiser was sunk and one of the destroyers, while the other one was severely damaged, barely able to get away. Owing to bad weather, the pilots could not determine whether the landing barges were for evacuation or for bringing reinforcements. Nothing further has been seen of the eight destroyers, and apparently the Japanese in their last foothold in Papua are to be left to fight the struggle without further help.

THE FLEEING JAPS CROSS THE KUMUSI RIVER in an effort to avoid encirclement by the Australians. The Japs sought out any primitive native dug-outs and canoes in their efforts to get downstream: some miles farther down the river they would strike a jungle trail which would lead them to Lae, on the Papuan coast—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

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The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

THE ELUSIVE BARRIE

Footnotes to "The Story of J.M.B." ; "Bucky"-Taylor's Bottled Reminiscences ; C. G. Grey and the Sea-Flyers ; Fougasse on the "Changing Face"

THAT interesting and remarkable biography, *The Story of J.M.B.*, by Denis Mackail, which was published last year, has a useful and, some people might say, necessary, postscript in the publication of LETTERS OF J. M. BARRIE, edited by Violet Meynell (Peter Davis. 15s.).

The impression left by Mr. Denis Mackail's book was that it was no mean feat to treat a subject in which so many facets of a complex character had to be weighed, appraised and sometimes discarded, and at the same time, to be aware that the subject himself was enormously protected by a quality of elusiveness, all the more effective because it was deliberate. Mine enemy hath written a book, said the prophet, but the implications of that declaration can even more strongly be found in the letters that men leave after them.

Yet Barrie could not have been unaware that, whenever he set pen to paper, and to whomever it was addressed, the document would almost certainly receive wider publication. So that, even in the most personal and intimate of these letters, the restraining hand of caution can be found, as well as the half-lights of that famous elusiveness. As Miss Meynell points out in her admirable introduction. "Barrie's letters of excuse would in themselves fill a volume—called *Please Excuse Me.*" She goes on to say that: "His attitude to personal publicity was too constant not to have its set formula." A remarkable enough attitude in modern times to have stung from an envious critic the gibe that no one knew better than Barrie how to back into the limelight.

This collection of letters, however, reveals that Barrie chose his friends for personal reasons, and his intimates for intimate ones. An introvert to a very special degree, "he was susceptible to kindness to whomever shown," and particularly to himself. "A sensitive awareness to others' needs or ills was the quality in his friends that laid him flat; and in himself it was the quality that made him a walking embodiment of *Please Excuse Me.* Nothing in that line escaped him. 'Your first instinct is always to telegraph to Jones the nice thing Brown said about him to Robinson; you have sown a lot of happiness that way,' he writes to one correspondent, spying on a surreptitious habit."

The inward-looking manifested itself in many ways. "There is an awful full-page picture of myself," he writes, "which is more like a tallow candle in distressed circumstances, or Michael says it is like a leper. On the other hand, there is a perfectly superb one with flashing eyes and the noblest moustache in the Army. I think it is the finest thing I have ever seen, and, in the dead of night, I sit alone gazing at it with an exaltation that even drink cannot give."

The letters in this volume are written to a variety of correspondents, but perhaps the most revealing are those written to his friends rather than to his intimates. This book does not remove all of the enigmatic mists, but it supplies a number of vital footnotes to *The Story of J.M.B.*

Mr. W. Buchanan-Taylor, known as "Bucky" to his innumerable friends, has written a characteristic book of reminiscences in SHAKE THE BOTTLE (Heath Cranton. 12s. 6d.).

The bottle itself contains ingredients which are snappily headed "Theatre," "Comics," "Freaks," "Women," "Morals," etc., so that by no stretch of coincidence or imagination could it be called the mixture as before. For, just as there is no one in and about Fleet Street quite like Bucky, so there has been no book quite like this one.

We learn that he started out as a messenger in the *Manchester Guardian* offices, where he had to wear carpet slippers. "Never was there a newspaper office with such a cathedral atmosphere." We may be surprised, but not unduly discouraged, to know that he went to a Unitarian Sunday School with Mr. James Agate, which experience may have been of some benefit to him in compiling that most interesting and instructive chapter on freaks.

He is not often serious, but there is a passage in the chapter called "Gee-Gees" which is worthy of serious attention. Talking about racecourses, he says, "It doesn't even seem to have occurred to them that the public are at least entitled to *see* the race in comfort, and ought to be given a proper view of a close finish."

In the course of his long and distinguished career, Bucky has known most of the famous men and women of his day, but you will search these pages in vain for the names of those statesmen whom everyone knows are his friends, or for an indiscretion which could cause embarrassment to anyone. The book is like the man himself—charming, interesting, exciting and most pleasantly companionable.

MRS. GEORGE S. PATTON, wife of the U.S. General who is leading the American Armoured Forces in their drive in North Africa, at her Washington home

MRS. EISENHOWER, wife of Lieut.-Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, in supreme command of the Allied Land Forces in North Africa, in her brother-in-law's house

LADY CONINGHAM, wife of Air Vice-Marshal Coningham, who has just been elevated to Knight Commander of the Bath for his work in Egypt

Mr. C. G. Grey, who knows more about flying and the history of flying than anyone living, has, in SEA-FLYERS (Faber. 7s. 6d.), completed the trilogy which began with *British Fighter Planes* and *Bombers*. The hydroplane, seaplane or flying-boat has, by its very amphibious nature, always managed to be the stepchild of aviation, just as, at one time, the R.N.A.S. was the Cinderella of the Royal Navy.

Yet it is as well to be reminded that it was with a seaplane that the Schneider Cup was won, and it was with similar craft that the first transatlantic service was established. One may go on and assert that amphibious aircraft have proved themselves to be vital in the maintenance of our command at sea in this war, and that aircraft based amphibiously upon carriers may well prove to be the key in those offensive actions which alone can bring ultimate victory.

Mr. C. G. Grey, as always, builds his story upon sound historical data, and back in this case to the pioneering of Glenn Curtiss, and the development of sea-flying by the British Navy through its Cinderella Arm. But Mr. Grey would not be running true to form if he were not provocative and did not throw some constructive criticism into his work.

It may startle some people, for instance, to know that he advocates the use of airships in the present war. It is a well-reasoned argument, summed up in this sentence: "I hold that big helium-filled airships with Diesel motors can do more to help the Allied navies, and to ensure the safe transport of Allied troops and goods, than any other sort of vehicle."

The development of trans-oceanic flight by means of big amphibious craft is an obvious post-war probability. Some people have even forecast in it the doom of the fast luxury passenger liner. Shipping may still control the freight lanes of the world, but passenger traffic may soar into the skies.

Mr. Grey has an ingenious explanation of its use by the belligerents in this war. He comments that it is an odd thing "that the Germans never shoot up our oversea air-mail craft between England and Portugal, although they fly right across the Bay of Biscay. The explanation seems to be that they are almost the only conveyances by which the Germans can get the English newspapers in time to be of any use to them."

By now, Fougasse has become a national institution, and there is scarcely a man, woman or child in these islands who has not at some time or other been aware of his incisive pictorial comment on current affairs. SORRY, NO RUBBER (Methuen. 6s.) is his latest collection, in which that series, "The Changing Face of Britain," predominates.

I am not qualified to comment on draughtsmanship, but I would like to say that Fougasse seems to get more expression into an eighth of an inch than some humorous artists manage to put into a whole drawing. He bubbles with wit, and can at times be devastating in his social commentary.

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